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The Empress St. Helena.

London Henry Colburn 1864

THE

QUEENS

BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

BY

MRS. MATTHEW HALL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR HENRY COLBURN,
BY HIS SUCCESSORS, HURST & BLACKETT,
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1854.

[*The Publishers reserve the right of translating this work.*]

PRINTED BY HARRISON AND SONS,
LONDON GAZETTE OFFICE ST. MARTIN'S LANE

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INTRODUCTION.

THESE volumes, it is believed, will be found to present the first connected outline of the history of Royal women prior to the Norman Conquest. Most readers are acquainted, through the medium of Miss Strickland's admirable work, with the personal memoirs of Matilda, Queen of the Conqueror, and her successors, who were united by the tie-matrimonial to our English monarchs; yet who can trace even an outline of the life of Editha the Good, her contemporary and predecessor on the throne? Of the stormy and troubled history of Queen Emma, who was wife of two kings, and mother also of two, and who first introduced her Norman countrymen into England, still less is known: nor are there to be found any connected details concerning the wives of those Saxon kings who laid the foundation of our English laws and institutions. No one has been found to go back beyond the era of the Conquest to

search amid dusty and worm-eaten records for details illustrative of the vast mine of history, with all its hidden stores of wealth, from the first to the eleventh century. Investigation has commenced from a point more lucid, when Norman conquerors imposed the Doomsday Book as a lasting token of their power.

Woman, possessing, as she ever does, an all-powerful influence over the events of her day, has thrown a bright light over the dark history of the first eleven centuries of our annals, and during that period we discover a succession of important historical events which have occurred through her instrumentality. Were not Roman taste and luxury first made popular in Britain through the influence of Cartismandua, and progressively developed under subsequent female sovereigns, her successors, during the Roman domination, not the least remarkable of whom was the Empress Julia, wife of Severus? Where, in the whole history of this country, is there a page to be found more glorious than that devoted to the British St. Helena, the Empress-mother of Constantine the Great, the self-devoted wife, the patroness of Christianity, the discoverer of the true cross, the builder of churches, the mother of the oppressed,—the glorious career of whose influence has, in a thousand ways, directly and indirectly, descended to our own times with her name and history? Deeply contrasted with these incidents are those forming the groundwork of the life of Boadicea, in whom we behold an instance of the native simplicity of a Briton by birth

and education: her fine womanly nature, aroused by unheard-of wrongs to revolt against tyranny and injustice, burst forth, like a torrent which deluged the whole land with blood, into that train of actions which had nearly quenched for ever the power of Rome in this island. The family details of Boadicea's history, of whom much has been written, have never before appeared in connection with her life, and without the knowledge of these it is impossible fairly to appreciate the exciting details of her sufferings as woman, wife, and mother—in the delineation of *her* character no fiction can arrive at the all-powerful force of simple truth.

Passing over Rowena, through whom was introduced the Saxon sway, we may remark that it was to the most excellent and pious Queen Bertha, a Frenchwoman of royal rank, that we were indebted for the primeval establishment of Christianity in Saxon Britain. That faith had, indeed, at an earlier period been introduced and cherished by royalty, but had fallen into disuse. From the time, however, when Bertha set the example, queens and princesses stood forth as the champions of the new creed: it became then *fashionable* to be a Christian; and that same land which had alone, through the merciful intervention of St. Helena, escaped the persecution of Dioclesian, became distinguished for examples of holy votaries to the faith of Christ. Not content with exercising every domestic and social virtue themselves, these Saxon females animated their husbands and lovers to a

similar self-devotion in the cause of religion. Many, indeed, of these sceptred women dedicated their whole existence to a religious state of seclusion. Then it was that kings laid aside their crowns and robes of state, and, assuming the monastic garb, at the exhortation of their royal partners, undertook pilgrimages to the Holy See, founded schools or endowed churches, which yet remain to attest their munificence. Such was the spirit which pervaded the Saxon Heptarchy, though the picture had sometimes its dark reverse, as in the characters of Quendrida and Ermenburga—and later still, the singularly beautiful and wicked Elfrida. Each of these royal ladies, whether good or bad actions marked her career, has her own appropriate niche in the annals of the past; and possessed her peculiar influence over the times in which she lived—an influence more or less descending to our remote age, though in few does the benefit conferred on society shine more conspicuously than in that gentle and amiable queen, mother of Alfred the Great, by whose beneficent attention to the education of her sons, some of the brightest rays of light have been shed on our English literature.

Such are a few of the leading features of a period comparatively unknown, and which cannot fail, it is hoped, to prove a useful study to those who desire an introduction to the History of England; for these personal records of the wives and daughters of our early monarchs, form naturally the connecting links between

many public events which would otherwise remain detached and unintelligible.

The history of British female Sovereigns before the period of the Conquest had necessarily to be drawn from chronicles which present many legendary records, and which grave writers have sometimes rejected, perhaps too unsparingly; for, as a learned translator* has observed, even legends are of value in recording the history of past times, and in them the germ of important events connected with the establishment and progress of religion may be found. But for the Sagas we should know little of the early habits of northern nations; and to more than one ballad are we indebted for an historical fact, which might otherwise have been forgotten. To the perseverance and study of recluses, who spent their whole lives in producing one work, we owe much gratitude; that they were generally guided by a spirit of truth we cannot doubt, as they were aware that their labours would become known to many a contemporary and rival in whose power it was, even at that day, to confute a writer, if he asserted more than had been handed down by tradition: at all periods there were critics as well as authors, and, as almost every monastery could boast of its learned historian, there was no want of jealous observation of the productions of their literary brethren amongst the monks who filled up their leisure with similar pursuits.

* Benj. Thorpe, F.S.A.; Introduction to Lappenberg's Anglo-Saxons.

To the bards, who sang their compositions from country to country, was intrusted the sacred task of relating great events: they kept alive in their songs the valiant deeds of heroes; their lays were faithfully repeated by the scribes, who committed them to writing, and, as time wore on, chroniclers sprang up, who, by diligent study, were able to understand and explain much that had become obscure to the uninitiated. The famous Abbey of Glastonbury produced the earliest historian of Britain, who, in the middle of the sixth century, set an example, followed almost uninterruptedly in other monasteries through several ages, till the little less than miraculous invention of printing rendered learning and information easy.

Milton, our greatest and most erudite poet, did not disdain the old legends of the early chroniclers, and has preserved in his history much that it is delightful to read of, and pleasant to believe; and our immortal dramatist sought at the same sources the subjects on which to frame his glorious imaginings.

From the lays of the Welsh bards, from Gildas, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, down to the latest publications which have thrown light on the history of the early British reigns, nothing has been neglected in the work now presented to the public which might conduct to truth, and offer a clear and interesting series of records of those female Sovereigns whose lives are so much less familiar to the English reader than others of a later period, who have found able recent biographers.

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* The name of the Empress Victoria's husband has not been handed down to posterity.

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ST. HELENA, Queen of CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS, from a full length portrait by MARC ANTONIO, in the British Museum

Frontispiece to Vol. I.

EDITHA "THE GOOD," Queen of EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

Frontispiece to Vol. II.

ERRATA.

VOLUME I.

Page 8, line 22, *for* "letters" *read* "litter."
,, 120, ,, 10, *for* "Marius" *read* "Marcus."

VOLUME II.

Page 10, line 14, *for* "Richryda" *read* "Richthryda."
,, 13, line 1 note, "brother" *read* "was brother."
,, 17, line 2, *for* "Penda" *read* "Peada."
,, 104, line 21, *for* "Enfleda" *read* "Elfleda."
,, 158, line 20, *for* "Knugilfus" *read* "Kinigilfus."
,, 198, line 15, *for* "Leof" *read* "Leolf."
,, 201, line 32, *for* "langour" *read* "languor."
,, 212, line 17, *for* "been" *read* "being."
,, 238, line 2, *for* "Witen" *read* "Witan."
,, 302, line 3, *for* "as the same" *read* "at the same."
,, 359, line 10, *for* "cœtus" *read* "cœstus."
,, 367, line 15, *for* "Monar" *read* "Morcar."

LIVES
OF
BRITISH QUEENS
BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

CARTISMANDUA.

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THE first British Queen, whose life offers any interest, after the Roman Invasion, is Cartismandua.

She is said to have been great-grand-daughter of King Lud, the eldest of the seven sons of Beli the Great, the heroes of the famous bards, Aneurin, Taliesin, Llywarch Hên, and their followers, whose compositions may be ascribed to the sixth century.[1]

1 Lappenberg's Hist. of England under the Anglo-Saxon kings.

Lud is a favourite with early chroniclers, and his name is preserved somewhat conspicuously in that of the capital of England.[1]

The father of Cartismandua was Mandubratius, or Afarwy, the son of Imanuentius, Prince of the Trinobantes, or people of Middlesex and Essex, whose contentions with the victorious Cassivellaunus, or Caswallon, led to the devastation of the country and the successes of the Romans. Afarwy had made overtures to Cæsar in Gaul, offering him the means of a second attempt on the country, which offer was gladly accepted; and Afarwy and his son Scæva, together with thirty others of his relations and adherents, placed themselves in the hands of the Romans as hostages, and afterwards accompanied the conqueror on his return to Rome, when Cassivellaunus had been forced to submit to the yoke of the powerful strangers, whose absence from his country he sacrificed much to obtain.

It is not known whether Afarwy had a wife with him when he quitted Britain; but it is supposed that, if so, after her death he espoused a Roman lady, according to the policy adopted by Cæsar, to secure the friendship of the islanders. Cartismandua, there is reason to think,[2] was the offspring of this second marriage, and it was in Rome that she married her cousin Cymbeline, one of the hostages, who, being in due time called back to Britain to assume the royal

[1] Nennius, Abbot of Bangor, wrote his Historia Britonum about the year 858, and speaks of earlier works to which he was indebted. He is indignant at the name of Troynovant being replaced by that of Lud's Town, as he insists on the tradition, of which the Britons were long proud, of a descent from Brutus, grandson of Æneas; "a fabulous national tradition of Rome," observes Dr. Lappenberg, "with the faded tinsel of which the vain Britons adorned themselves," in appropriating it to their own nation.

[2] Carte. Roberts' British History.

sway, was accompanied by his bride on his return to the land of his nativity.

Although no particulars of the childhood of the daughter of Afarwy have been handed down to us, the early years of Cymbeline, her husband, have not been suffered to rest in the shade by historians. The hero of Britain, as he afterwards became, and who has been made familiar to us by Shakespeare, was, when a British hostage, educated in Rome, that most polished of cities, and, like the youths his companions in the same circumstances, received eventually an appointment suitable to his rank. Various offices were indeed assigned to the Britons.

Cicero, with true Roman contempt, speaks of Britain in his time as a country from which slaves only could be procured,—alluding to certain captives who had been sent by their conquerors to the circus, where, no doubt, their novel appearance would at that day excite as much interest as any barbarian exhibited on our own stage would do; or the orator might speak in reference to certain Britons appointed to carry the letters of the Emperor,—a post certainly, if ignoble, requiring fidelity to his person. Cymbeline could scarcely be included in Cicero's contemptuous notice, for he not only received a noble education, but was appointed to attend in person on the Emperor Augustus in his wars; in which service he became so distinguished for his valour, that he was rewarded with the honour of knighthood, which carried with it certain peculiar and enviable distinctions.

The Eques, or Roman knight, was permitted to wear rings on his fingers, which no inferior person might display. He was also entitled to wear a dress embroidered with broad guards and studs of purple,

which, together with the horse he rode, were provided by the Senate. The British coins of Cymbeline bear the horse-rampant, which shows how proudly the prince regarded the Imperial favour. The Roman knight who had, like Cymbeline, conducted himself valiantly in time of war, *if a stranger and auxiliary*, as in his case, was rewarded with a chain of gold, while a citizen of Rome could only gain a silver one by his valour. By such distinctions the Roman emperors attached foreigners to their service,—a politic measure, as was proved by the firmness with which the husband of Cartismandua continued friendly to the Roman interest.

An especial dignity was also enjoyed by the wives of the knights of Rome: to this Cartismandua must necessarily have been admitted. The knowledge of the early associations of the future Queen of the Britons may serve to explain, in some degree, many of the circumstances of her after-life. She was brought up in all the pomp and splendour of a luxurious court, with the throne of Augustus ever before her eyes, and the riches, glory, and honours of the Roman nation continually present to her view. At that time, love of dress and display was carried to a most inordinate height in the Imperial City, and we find Pliny reproving with indignation the monstrous disorders which had crept into the world, following up his remonstrance thus: "But say that women may be allowed to wear as much gold as they will, in bracelets, in rings on every finger-joint, in carcanets about their necks, in earrings pendent at their ears, in stays, wreaths, and chin-bands; let them have their chains of gold as large as they list under their arms, or cross over their sides, scarf-wise; and say that gentlewomen and mistresses

may have their collars of gold thickly beset and garnished with massive pearls, pendent at their neck, beneath their waist; that even in their beds, when they should sleep, they may remember what a weight of gold they carry about them; must they therefore wear gold upon their feet, as it were to establish a third estate of women, answerable to the order of knights, between the matrons or dames of honour, and the wives of mean commoners?" From this passage it would appear that golden ornaments on the feet were permitted to Roman knights,—a privilege no doubt prized by all who formed part of the community. Cartismandua, among the rest of the ladies who were married to Roman knights, must have incurred the censure of the historian. It is not surprising, on reflecting to what a height of luxury the ladies of the period had arrived, that in after-times she should have disdained the simple manners of her uncultivated British subjects; and she may be excused if her heart should have reverted and clung in later years to those among whom she had known her earliest enjoyments. The love of splendour in dress must have become habitual to her, and it was but natural that she should sigh for scenes of gaiety so congenial to youth. Cartismandua cannot justly be blamed for this weakness so common to her sex and breeding, nor can it be imputed to her as a crime that she preserved to the last day of her existence her faithful attachment to Rome. This latter feeling was also strongly inculcated and reciprocated by Cymbeline, who is said to have made himself so dear to the Emperor that he was saluted by the honourable title of "Friend to the Commonwealth;" and on his return to Britain, Augustus granted him permission

either to pay or receive remittance of the tribute imposed by Cæsar on the Britons, according to his own pleasure. Cymbeline did not avail himself of the generous offer, being desirous to preserve the friendship of the Romans, and to secure for the British youth an opportunity of continuing to make their residence at the capital, where there were so many opportunities of obtaining an enlightened education, the advantage of which he had himself fully experienced.

It would be curious to follow the route of Cartismandua and her husband, in that early age of Britain's annals, when they journeyed towards the land over which the death of Tenantius, Afarwy's brother, had called them to rule. There were then no facilities of travel, and the difficulties were greater than we can now well conceive. The usual passage from Gaul to Britain appears to have been from Boulogne, in Belgic Gaul, to Sandwich, or from Calais to Dover as at the present day. There has been a question as to what description of vessel was used for the service of passing the narrow seas; but those antiquaries who contend for the *coracle*, a frail bark only used for rivers, could have been but little aware of the nature of the Channel. There were, probably, vessels of sufficient weight and power to render the navigation comparatively easy to less experienced sailors than our own; and, of course, all the resources of art, as it then existed, would have been employed, that the royal pair should arrive on their own shores with becoming pomp.

But it was probably at the port of Dowgate,[1] on the Thames, at London, that Cartismandua and her husband landed, and from that spot commenced a triumphant

[1] Holinshed.

entry into the city in one of those chariots, gorgeously painted and adorned with silver, which historians have described with minuteness.[1]

As Cymbeline was a Roman knight, the distinguished friend of Augustus, and a descendant of their own royal family, both himself and Cartismandua must have been welcomed by the Britons with every honour which it was possible for them to offer.

Lud's Town, or London, had even then arisen to considerable importance as "the resort of merchants" and residence of the chief of the Trinobantes, of which state it was the capital. It is said to have contained more dwellings than any other town in Britain; and simple as these were as far as architecture is concerned, they were important in their kind: the Britons did not employ stone for the construction of their dwellings till taught the art of architecture by Agricola,[2] nor was glass used for architectural purposes till some time after the Saxon invasion. The feeling which touched the heart of the noble Caractacus, when he viewed the Roman splendour, might have cast a shade on that of Cartismandua when she first beheld her own future regal abode. Caractacus is said to have exclaimed: "How is it possible that a

[1] Mauda, Queen of Connaught, the contemporary of Cartismandua, is described as leading her troops to battle, seated in an open chariot, with her crown of gold on her head;* the royal car which conveyed her being accompanied by four chariots, one before, another behind, and two on either side, attended by a great retinue of chariots and horses; while the Queen herself is described as having been apprehensive lest she should contaminate or defile the golden crown and her royal robes with the dust raised by the horses' feet, or the foam proceeding from the mouths of the fiery steeds. See O'Halloran, O'Flaherty, &c., and "Titles of Honour."

[2] Howel.

* Cæsar brought with him from Britain a corslet richly adorned with British pearls, which he dedicated to Venus. This was one of the spoils which gave the Romans an idea of the riches of Britain. The Scottish and Irish kings wore crowns of gold.

people possessed of such magnificence at home, could envy me a humble cottage in Britain!" The rough warrior had passed his whole life amid these humble, yet, to him, happy abodes of barbarians, whom Diodorus describes at this time as characterised by simplicity, integrity, temperance, and a proneness to dissension. Caractacus looked only on their noble qualities; but Cartismandua had quitted all that art, wealth, and luxury could combine to make life enviable, and like a tender exotic, had been removed from that warm and genial soil, to breathe the air of a land, the customs of which were opposed to all her habits, and which reminded her at each fresh step of what she had left behind; that she shrunk from her allotted destiny, was not therefore surprising.

The royal residence of Dinas Beli, the Palace or Court of Belinus,[1] was a structure in Lud's Town, which extended over the Broken Wharf into the city, till it approached the Gate of Belinus, its royal founder, brother of the Brennus who headed the Gauls and sacked Rome in the time of Camillus. The words Ludgate and Billingsgate[2] are familiar in our own days; and Holinshed assures us, that in his time there were yet remaining the ruins of the old Palace of Belinus, which had been patched up and converted into warehouses. Belinus's gate was on the banks of the Thames, and is said to have been once surmounted by the king's image, while his ashes were preserved in a golden urn contained in the gateway, beneath which was a haven or quay for ships, it being one of the chief gates or entrances into the capital. Livy, the historian of the Court of Augustus,[3] and contemporary of Cymbeline and Cartismandua, has related the history of Brennus, brother of King

[1] Humphrey Llwyd's Breviary of Britain.
[2] Holinshed. [3] Milton.

Belinus, as Plutarch has also done in his account of Camillus. In the palace of Dinas Beli, probably, the royal pair were accordingly installed as their future residence.

One of the first acts of Cymbeline in Britain, was to issue an entirely new coinage of tribute-money, bearing the initials of his own name; which was a great advance in art for the Britons, who, up to that time, had been accustomed to use rings of brass and iron, wrought to certain degrees of value, for money,[1] as had been customary among the early Greeks. Many specimens of the coins of Cymbeline, his head crowned with a diadem of pearls, may still be seen in the cabinets of antiquaries. No less than forty gold, silver, and copper coins of this king, of different dies and moulds, have been discovered,—a proof of the extent to which coinage was carried in his reign.[2] Cymbeline is thought to have derived the art itself from his intercourse with the Romans: certain it is, that civilization,[3] during his reign, increased with rapid strides in the land under his rule.

The inscription Cimog on some of the coins of Cymbeline, gave rise to the Cemog, or Denarius, which may be considered the only coin which has a truly British name; and the word TASCIO on the reverse, signifies the Mint or Treasury.

Cymbeline was the first British monarch who stamped his image upon his coins, sometimes with two faces, like Janus, whose temple was closed during his reign. Six of these coins have the obverse only, with the inscription CUNO; and two more, one of which was only found

[1] Rapin.

[2] Pegge's Essay on the Coins of Cunobelinus.

[3] Rev. P. Roberts on the Early History of the Cymry, or Ancient Britons. Britton and Brayley.

in March 1849,[1] among a number of gold coins, at Whaddon Chase, have upon them a horse and wreath; that which was last discovered, was in weight 180 grains; on the reverse was a horse-rampant, an evident allusion to the dignity enjoyed by Cymbeline as a Roman Eques; and on the obverse was a thistle or ear of wheat, doubtless an intimation that corn was supplied to the Romans with the tribute-money.

As the greater number of the coins of Cymbeline have been dug up near Colchester, and bear, besides the monarch's initials of CUNO, the letters CAMY upon them, it is thought that that city was the royal seat of power, as indeed is expressly stated by Dion Cassius. Malden in Essex, and Malton in Yorkshire, have laid claim to being, in former times, the royal residence of British monarchs,[2] each having borne the name of Camalodunum—a mark that Cymbeline at some period resided there,[3] and that the town so named was capital of some district belonging to him: thus, not only were there several Camalodunums, but several cities bearing the name of Venta; Norwich was the Venta or Winchester of the Iceni, and Winchester, now known by the name, was Venta of the Wiccii.

No remains of antiquity can perhaps better convey to the mind the choice of situation selected by our early ancestors for the abode of monarchy, than that spot amidst the Chiltern Hills, in Buckinghamshire, where still appears a high circular mound or keep, in

[1] Bucks Herald, March 17, 1849.

[2] Allen's History of York.

[3] Dr. Henry assures us that Cymbeline held his court at Malden, which was formerly celebrated for its beauty and magnificence, though only two Roman coins have been found in its vicinity, one of which is held so precious that it is carefully guarded by the bailiffs of the town; both are of the time of the Emperor Claudius.

circumference about eighty paces, known to the present day as "Kimble's Castle;"[1] while a little adjacent village bears the same king's name, in defiance of the wreck of time and lapse of centuries. The romantic situation of this strong post would no doubt render it a favourite residence of the Romanized monarch Cymbeline and his consort. From the summit of Belinsbury Hill, which constituted a part of the territory adjacent to this ancient British fortress, we may imagine the eyes of Queen Cartismandua roving at pleasure over an almost boundless prospect of surpassing beauty. In which of the royal British abodes Cartismandua lived is, however, uncertain; or where her children, namely, five sons and one daughter, were brought up.

Adminius, the eldest son, in after times, having offended his father, was exiled the country; on which he placed himself under the protection of Caligula, then Emperor of Rome, who, at his suggestion, undertook that fictitious invasion of Britain, which terminated in the gathering a few shells[2] on the coast of Gaul, with which he triumphantly returned to Rome. After this, no more is heard of Adminius; but the Roman writers extol his merits, with those of his brother Togodumnus, who befriended their interest; while they preserve a profound silence as to Arviragus[3] and Guiderius, their brothers, who became afterwards bitter enemies of Rome, and for whose actions our own native historians are the authorities.

This circumstance must have embittered, in no small degree, the domestic happiness of Cartismandua and her family; for the son, who thus disappointed their hopes, was the first-born, and heir to the name and royal

[1] "The ancient name of the village of Kimble, whenever it occurs in our records, is written Kynebel or Cunobel, and in the Domesday Book is Chenebella."—*Lysons.*

[2] Dr. Henry. [3] Lewis's History of Great Britain.

honours of the house of Cymbeline. That good king himself, nevertheless, preserved his faith unbroken with Rome during a long reign, which passed usefully to his subjects, and peacefully to both himself and them. Indeed, peace and plenty seem to have marked the era of Cymbeline; yet prosperity did not corrupt him, as is too commonly the case; and it may be presumed that the married life of Cartismandua and her lord, glided smoothly and serenely on with the fair current of time. After a long and glorious reign, Cymbeline died, much regretted by his people; his death being, as they rightly judged, a national loss.

Cartismandua was no longer young at the time of becoming a widow; for her husband had reigned as many as fifty years, according to some authorities.[1]

It was customary in Britain, on the death of a monarch, for his widow or daughter to succeed to the government, if there were no sons; but in this case, there being several princes to inherit the dominions of Cymbeline, they were divided into three portions, of which one was given to Togodumnus, another to Caractacus, while the third portion fell to the widow, their mother. It is, however, uncertain whether either of these states was considered tributary to the other as a minor principality. Laws of Adminius, the eldest of Cartismandua's children, have also been found; but this would rather lead us to suppose he had possessed some share of power during his father's life, and tributary to him, prior to the event of his banishment, which might have led to the act of rebellion that occasioned his father's displeasure.

The territory inhabited by the Iceni[2] was the district

[1] Rapin and Henry say Cymbeline reigned thirty-five years; he died, according to Morant, A.D. 42.

[2] Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridge, and Huntingdon.

which fell to the share of Cartismandua; and this is the first time that a people afterwards so celebrated are named in our histories, Cymbeline being expressly said to have been "King of the Iceni," and the Iceni themselves are mentioned as having studiously laboured to preserve their amity with the Romans.

Norfolk and Suffolk, afterwards distinguished by the name of East Anglia during the Saxon Heptarchy, may be considered as the property by right of inheritance of Cartismandua, and where she probably retired on her widowhood.

The Iceni were not less likely to be faithful allies of Rome, now that Cartismandua reigned over them; and it may be remarked that female government was exceedingly popular at all times in Britain.[1] The fact of the near vicinity of this British district to that part of the country known under the name of Brigantia led to very important results, and opened out a train of events which involved in agitation all the subsequent period of Cartismandua's life. The latent ambition of the character of Cartismandua appeared, unrepressed, after her widowhood; for such must have been the motive which actuated her in her union, shortly after Cymbeline's death, with the Chief of the Brigantes. The mother, by Cymbeline, of a numerous family, Cartismandua could not have wanted scope for the exercise of her affections, and at her mature age, no other reason can be assigned than that she desired still to extend her power. The noble character of Cadallan, Prince of the Brigantes, it must be confessed, might well have won her affection, and may have swayed her choice. Whatever the motive on either side might be, this alliance was entered into, and from that time Cartismandua becomes known to future history as Queen of the Brigantes.

[1] Tacitus.

The celebrated district called Brigantia or Galloway, consisted of the large portion of country which extended from the mouth of the Humber to the wall afterwards built by Adrian across the whole breadth of the island, and was inhabited by a chosen body of the Scottish nation, appointed to guard this frontier province from the incursions of the southern Britons, then considered their mortal enemies. This brave, hardy, and adventuous people were distinguished above every other British tribe for their love of liberty, and fought to maintain it as late as the eightieth year of the Christian era, long after all their fellow-countrymen had submitted to the Roman empire.

Brigantia contained many places of great strength and importance, amongst which were Aldborough or Iseur, in Yorkshire, Eboracum or York, afterwards the seat of Roman power in Britain, Caricton ium, and Epiake.[1]

Cadallan, chief of the Brigantes, the new husband of the widowed Queen of Cymbeline, was guardian of the young King of the Scots; he had been formerly married to Europeia, a sister of Metallanus, afterwards king, by whom he had several children, the eldest of whom was the famous hero, Caractacus, and the youngest, Boadicea, afterwards so celebrated for her heroism and misfortunes.[2] It is rather remarkable that two princes should have been conspicuous at the same time in our annals, each bearing the name of Caractacus, one the son, the other the step-son, of Cartismandua; a circumstance which has created no small confusion among historians: that they are quite different persons, may be plainly established on examining the particulars of their times with attention.

[1] D'Anville. Hutchinson's Durham.
[2] Scott, Anderson, and Nesbitt.

The precise date of the marriage of Cartismandua to Cadallan is not given, but it was shortly followed by other alliances among their families not less important; the Brigantine princess Boadicea being given in marriage to Arviragus, son of Cartismandua, while his sister became the wife of Caractacus, son of Europeia, who, perhaps to distinguish him from his contemporary and namesake, the King of the Britons, was designated Urickfras, or the Strong-armed. These ties no doubt were intended still further to strengthen the states of Britain, and on the part of the Brigantines, to fortify themselves against Rome in case of necessity; but unfortunately events did not occur in the course which had been anticipated.

One of the first important changes was the death of Metallanus, King of Scots, who leaving no children, the throne devolved upon Caractacus, his nephew; for the laws relative to succession among the Picts were different from those of the Celtic and Teutonic nations, the sons inheriting by right of their mother:[1] thus Caractacus obtained the crown as the son of Europeia; by his elevation the daughter of Cartismandua became the Queen of the Scots,—a brilliant event in the life of her aspiring mother. But it must be named that Cadallan did not himself live to witness his son's accession to power; he died at an early period after his union with Cartismandua, leaving his consort with entire control over the kingdom of Brigantia, now hers in her own right,[2] which, joined to that of the Iceni, gave her as much influence throughout the island as could possibly be enjoyed by either her children or step-children.[3] Well might the heart of the Roman Queen of the Britons be lifted up, in beholding her noble and fortunate offspring blessed with peace,

[1] Palgrave. [2] Dr. Henry. [3] Carte, &c.

prosperity and power, and herself the friend and ally of a nation so mighty as that of Rome; as an instance of the esteem in which she was held, it is recorded that a large sum of money had been lent to her husband Cadallan by that people,—a circumstance which, though gratifying in the beginning, in the end proved disadvantageous to her interests.

Some account should here be given of a people so singular as the new subjects of Cartismandua,—the Brigantes, who are said to have been the same tribe as the Meatæ, who eventually settled north of the Wall of Adrian.[1]

The Caledonians and Meatæ, in war and peace, closely resembled each other. Their arms of warfare consisted of a short spear, a broadsword, a dirk, and javelin, with a small target for self-defence. They had neither towns nor villages, houses nor towers; living only in huts, they, like the Britons of the south, had for their subsistence, chiefly milk, the flesh of cattle, and the game killed by their own hands. They were swift and sure-footed, could patiently endure toil, and every hardship. They had horses which were small in size and fleet, and were accustomed to use chariots in warfare, in which they rushed to the thickest of the battle. It is related that in long marches they used a preparation, a quantity of which, no bigger than a bean, sufficed to prevent all sense of hunger and thirst. They were in the habit, like the Britons, of painting and tattooing their bodies, whence they are thought to have obtained the name of *Picts*. In war they cast aside the wolf-skins, which they were accustomed to wear over their left shoulder, girt with leathern thongs,[2] and appeared on the field of battle almost naked, like the Roman gladiators, wearing round their

[1] Ridpath's Border History. [2] Hutchinson's Durham.

neck, collars or torques, formed of twisted iron wire, which they regarded as great ornaments, and prized as highly as the other British tribes did theirs of silver and gold;[1] their greatest pride was to exhibit their skins punctured as they were, and painted with the figures of divers animals, flowers, and the heavenly bodies.

There is every reason to believe that the pictures represented on the body of each individual were an index to his history, and like the hieroglyphics of the ancient Egyptians, handed down records from generation to generation.[2] Such an art, rude as it was, displays no small ingenuity; this opinion is corroborated by the fact, that these figures were afterwards transferred to the shield or banner of the person to whom they belonged. The "marks of the Britons," as they were called,[3] may be regarded as a personal species of heraldry, often recognisable in their names, as in that of "Pendragon," the appellation of the family of King Arthur of renowned memory,—the head of a dragon being his device.

It is remarkable that nearly all the ancient British names were expressive of colour;[4] and Camden, who makes this observation, adds that "the most com-

[1] Smith and Meyrick. Howel's Med. Hist. Angl.; and Herodian.
[2] O'Flaherty says the figures were printed with ink, by iron marks.
[3] By Tertullian, "Britannorum stigmata."
[4] The following list is given on the authority of Camden:—
Cogidumnus and Argentocoxus contain *coch* or *goch*, red.
Mandubratius, Cartismandua, Togodumnos, and Bonduca contain *dû*, black.
Venusius and Immannentius contain *gwyn* or *uen*, white.
Cyniglas contains *glas*, blue.
Cingetorix and Arviragus contain *aure*, or gold colour.
Some of the above names were derived from the Romans, as the word *werith*, green, from *viridis*, by which the identity of the names Arviragus and Prasutagus is proved, *werith* and *prasinus* both signifying green.

mon names of the Britons at present, Gwyn, Dû, Goch, Llwyd, were derived from white, black, red and russet; so that it seems not at all extraordinary that the whole nation should have taken their name from the several tints used in the general practice of painting themselves; and the inhabitants also, both ancient and modern, take their name from colours." The plants called madder were not only in constant requisition for home use, but next to tin and wool constituted a great article of commerce with the continent; it was thought by Pliny to have been the same as the plantain of Gaul. Not only married women, but young maidens, are said to have anointed and dyed their bodies with the juice of this plant; some indeed stained themselves all over with its deepest dye, till they became, in colour, like Ethiopians,—a fashion much esteemed. In this guise they attended solemn fasts and festivals, without any other attire,[1] though this seems to have been only the practice for certain offices of religion.

Such was the people amongst whom Cartismandua, refined by birth, education, and association, found herself in command. A change at this time seems to have taken place in her character, and brings it out in a stronger and less pleasing light than it has hitherto appeared.

From the period of the banishment of Adminius, Rome had become a rendezvous for all disaffected Britons. Bericus, a rebel, who had fled thither, having been received and protected by the Emperor Claudius, who refused to deliver him up on application from Togodumnus, King of the Britons, that prince was so offended,[2] that when the next application was made by the Romans for the tribute-money, they met with

[1] Pliny, Speed. [2] Milton, Rapin, Speed.

an indignant refusal, and were, moreover, so fiercely attacked by the passionate Guiderius that they scarcely escaped with their lives: in their haste, they fled to the shelter of those fortresses they had prudently established to guard against a sudden surprise.[1]

The Britons followed up this attack by prohibiting all commerce with Rome.[2] The news of this decree annoyed the Romans greatly, as much of the British produce had become necessary to them; particularly the metals,[3] which they prized highly. Pliny says that the best mirrors were anciently made with a mixture of copper and tin; and that in his time those of silver were so common, that they "were used even by the servant-maids." These metallic mirrors were very much in request amongst ancient nations. The Egyptian women, whenever they went to their temples, carried one in their left hand.

Pliny observes that such was the luxury of the Romans, that it was simply reckoned a piece of elegance to consume, in the ornaments of coaches and the trappings of horses, metals which their ancestors could not use even in drinking vessels, without being astonished at their own prodigality. Nero and his wife shod their favourite horses with gold and silver.

We learn also from Pliny, that the lead mines of Britain were very productive during the first century, especially that at Comeristwith, in Wales; so much so, that the Britons had limited the amount of the yearly quantity to be wrought and transported over the sea. Pliny relates a marvellous story of one of the miners

[1] Holinshed. [2] Ibid.

[3] Lead, in the form of *ceruse*, was in great request among the Roman ladies as a cosmetic. Plautus introduces a waiting-woman refusing to give her mistress either ceruse or rouge, because, in the true spirit of a flattering Abigail, "she thought her quite handsome enough without them."—*Bp. Watson.*

and a favourite crow, which was so tame, that it daily flew and followed him wherever he went. "This man, being one day at work in a valley where the first mine was known to be, laid his purse and girdle beside him, and set to work earnestly; according to his usual custom. The crow kept flitting about him, till it molested him so much that he got angry and menaced the bird. The crow, on this, seized the girdle and purse in its beak and flew away. The man, in despair at the thought of losing his money, threw aside his tools and set off in pursuit. By this he saved his life, for he was scarcely out of the mine when it fell in and killed all his fellow-workmen."

British wicker-work,[1] also, was a commodity highly prized at Rome, and much inconvenience was experienced by the Romans from the loss of all this produce, when Togodumnus thus checked the commerce between the two countries. Not the least was the deficiency in payment of the tribute-money, so regularly transmitted by Cymbeline during the whole of his long reign; for though the Romans held Britain in contempt, her money was acceptable.[2]

Claudius despatched an army to reduce Britain to obedience. Aulus Plautius, a man of consular dignity and great wisdom and valour, was, with Cneius Sentius, appointed to the command; he was accompanied by Vespasian, afterwards Emperor, and various other noted persons, among whom was the young Titus, who in this war greatly distinguished himself, and on one occasion was so fortunate as to save his father's life.[3] Four legions,

[1] Holinshed.

[2] Hegesippus says, of Britain, "When we would deprive men not only of the privileges of Rome, but, in a manner, of the conversation of mankind, we send them thither, and banish them out of the world."

[3] Suetonius, Milton, Dr. Henry.

with auxiliaries and cavalry, in all constituting a force of 50,000, embarked for Britain, when an amusing incident occurred,—the soldiers beseeching Plautius, with great earnestness, "not to lead them against a people inhabiting a region beyond the limits of the world:" so barbarous were the Britons considered by these civilized Roman soldiers, that Plautius had the utmost difficulty in getting them on board the vessels.

On their arrival, the Romans were guided by Bericus to the parts of Britain inhabited by his friends; but so bravely were they opposed by the natives, that although in the contest Caractacus[1] and Togodumnus were slain, Plautius was compelled to write off to Claudius to come to his assistance.[2] The aged Emperor, immediately on his arrival, advanced into the country of the Trinobantes, and took possession of Camalodunum.[3] After this he laid siege to the city of Winchester, where Arviragus, who, by his brother Guiderius's death in this contest, had become King, had stationed himself. The Romans first besieged Venta; but afterwards, it was proposed to Arviragus that he should divorce his Queen, Boadicea, and espouse Gwenissa, the daughter of Claudius, at the same time acknowledging the Roman supremacy. These terms being acceded to, peace was agreed on between the Roman Emperor and his barbarian son-in-law.

[1] This Caractacus, or Caradoc, was son of Cymbeline and Cartismandua. The victory of Plautius, the Roman general, was honoured with an ovation, and when he went to Rome, the Emperor in person came forth to meet him, giving him the right hand all the way.

[2] Speed.

[3] Claudius, aware of the terror created among the Britons by the appearance of an elephant, well fenced with iron, having on its back a tower full of men, such as Cæsar had brought over with his army, caused some to be brought to Britain on the present expedition. On the former occasion the sight of that monstrous walking battery, moving into the Thames, had effectually frightened the Britons from the opposite shores.—*Lewis, Rapin.*

During the stay of Claudius in Britain, he is said to have endeavoured to reduce the Brigantes also under the Roman yoke. It is worthy of notice that Seneca, who is said to have lent money to the husband of Cartismandua, writes thus of Claudius; and Camden,[1] who gives the passage, considers it a clear proof that their submission was not enforced, but voluntary: —

> "'Twas he whose all-commanding yoke
> The furthest Britons gladly took;
> Him the Brigantes in blue arms adored,
> When the vast ocean feared his power,
> Restrained with laws unknown before,
> And trembling Neptune served a Roman lord."

It was natural that Cartismandua should receive the Romans amicably, though the acquiescence of her subjects in an alliance with their hitherto hated foes, must have been rather the result of necessity than free will, as subsequent events proved. Whether Cartismandua was personally introduced to the Emperor, is not positively stated; but assuredly a princess known in infancy to the mighty Cæsar, and educated at his court, would readily confirm with Claudius the friendship Cymbeline had during his life preserved unbroken. It is true that two of her sons had thrown off that alliance, and called forth the angry indignation of the "masters of the world," but they had paid with their lives the penalty of opposition. Policy clearly directed Cartismandua to avail herself of the Roman protection, and she appears to have seen cause to remain their ally and friend to the last.

After the return of Claudius to Rome, the war broke out afresh, through the resentment of Caractacus at the injuries done his sister, Boadicea, whose cause he warmly espoused; and we afterwards find Arviragus, after

[1] Mag. Brit.

he had become sufficiently powerful, abandoning his allegiance to Rome, forsaking the daughter of Claudius, and reconciling himself to Boadicea. Vespasian, at the head of the Romans, defeated the allied forces of the Britons, and fearing Cartismandua would espouse the cause of her children, he, after taking the city of Camelon, hastily marched into Galloway or Brigantia, and took possession of the city of Carrick. It was at that place, the capital of the territories of Cartismandua, that Vespasian received the oaths of allegiance of the Brigantes, who despaired of recovering their freedom.[1] Cartismandua being herself desirous to maintain peace, and, moreover, indebted to them a large sum of money, was placed in a difficult position. Her son, whose character proves him to have inherited her own ambition, had been forced into submission, Vespasian requiring him to come in his own person, casting aside his royal attire, and appearing in the humblest apparel, a suppliant for pardon and protection: this the proud Queen was obliged to acquiesce in, however galling she might find it.

Not long afterwards Vespasian was recalled by Claudius to Rome, and we do not hear any more of Arviragus from this date, except as the ally and friend of the Romans, whose protection was thus secured to both Cartismandua and himself.

Aulus Plautius being left at the head of the Roman affairs in Britain, at a time when a dangerous illness prevented his attending to the necessary duties of the war, the Romans were in danger of losing as much as they had gained, when Ostorius Scapula, a man of noble descent, and great experience both in peace and war, was appointed Pro-Prætor in the place of Aulus Plautius. He had no sooner arrived than that general expired at

[1] Holinshed.

Camelon, where he was residing at the time:[1] he had survived the departure of Vespasian only two years, during which time the warfare had been carried on in Kyle and Galloway against the brave Caractacus.

After the arrival of Ostorius, the Britons made a fierce irruption into the territories in alliance with Rome, but were repulsed with great slaughter. Among the friends of the Roman Empire, the Iceni till then might be numbered, who had "by their own request" kept up an amicable footing: these were the subjects of Cymbeline and Cartismandua, and had consequently been uninjured by the war. When Ostorius, to protect himself from his disaffected neighbours, attempted to build a chain of forts between the Nen and the Severn, the Iceni themselves flew to arms. They were, however, defeated, and Marcus Ostorius, son of the Roman general, for saving the life of a fellow-citizen in the engagement, was presented with the civic crown. Those of the Brigantines who had rebelled were also obliged to make terms of peace, and the Silures alone maintained the contest under the brave Caractacus, son-in-law of Queen Cartismandua.[2]

About this time the Queen of the Brigantes had married Venusius, a British chieftain, one of the most skilful

[1] Plautius was interred in the church of Claudius and Victoria, which Vespasian had built on the banks of the river, near the city; the body of the Roman proprætor had been previously burnt, and the ashes inclosed in an urn after the Roman fashion. The Picts and Scots afterwards adopted this mode of burial.* "The British *cairn* was a heap of stones thrown over the urns in which they deposited the ashes of the dead. These were placed in a stone chest within, termed by the Welsh and Irish by a word denoting a *bed*, and by the British word signifying *sleeping-place*. There were no inscriptions, but a few triplets committed to memory handed down, by oral tradition, the names and deeds of the departed."† Bania, an Irish queen, was interred in the hill called, from the circumstance, Knockbane.‡

[2] Tacitus.

* Holinshed. † Smith and Meyrick. ‡ O'Flaherty.

generals of his time. This prince, called by some writers Prince of the Jugantes, possessed many noble qualities; but whatever motives led to this marriage of Queen Cartismandua, it is generally allowed to have proved most unfortunate to the parties themselves, to their country, and to their allies, the Romans. Both British and Roman authors concur in the praise of Venusius, whose coins have been preserved, and may be seen represented in some of their histories. New accessions to the dignity and possessions of the already powerful Cartismandua must have accrued from this match, and at first no symptoms appeared of the evils about to ensue. Yet a period of calamity for Britain, and bloodshed for Rome, was preparing. While all seemed to submit to the Roman supremacy, one high and haughty soul had scorned to tamper with the freedom of his country. Caractacus had already struggled boldly for his sister's sake; he now reappeared in arms against Rome, and battle followed battle during the space of nine years, Britain becoming the scene of a succession of contests, which ended only in the defeat of that heroic and vainly persevering chieftain.

In the last fatal encounter which took place at Caer Caradoc,[1] in Shropshire, A.D. 51, the Britons were completely defeated, the wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken prisoners, one of his brothers was forced to surrender at discretion,[2] and the unfortunate prince himself, who was so severely wounded that he with the greatest difficulty escaped from the field of battle, was

[1] Tacitus, Warrington, Holinshed, Speed, Lewis, &c.

[2] Until very recently it was customary for a society of gentlemen to meet annually on the hill Caer Caradoc, so famed for being the scene of the defeat of the hero whose name it bears, whose praise they celebrate on the occasion in prose or verse. On one of those occasions an admirable extempore poem was delivered by the Rev. Mr. Sneyd Davies.*

* Pennant, Lluyd.

compelled to seek an asylum with his mother-in-law, Queen Cartismandua, who was at the time residing at Dunstaffnage, one of the royal cities of the Brigantes: the heroic chief, judging by his own heart, trusted that his mother-in-law, though an ally of Rome, would respect his misfortunes, and protect his person in this hour of extreme exigency.

A dark cloud now overshadows the character of Cartismandua, who, instead of extending the protection which Caractacus had hoped to find, at once abandoned every feeling of affection and compassion, and mindful only of her own interest, delivered up her unfortunate son-in-law to the Roman general.

If anything could be advanced in extenuation of such an act, it might be the fact that the daughter of Cartismandua was in the power of the Romans, with several other members of the family of Caractacus; perhaps fear for her daughter's fate, should she neglect to deliver up the enemy of Rome, might have had some influence on her conduct, together with alarm for her own safety and that of her kingdom. Before she decided to betray the unfortunate Caractacus, Cartismandua, it appears, consulted her husband, and her doing so seems to show that she still hesitated. Self-interest, however, prevailed; and she reflected that to protect and shelter Caractacus would be to violate her own faith with the Romans; and she reasoned, that to give him up, would, perhaps, be the ultimate means of saving his life, as well as that of her daughter, while both, as relatives of hers, might be respected by the conqueror. Amid these conflicting arguments, Venusius, anxious to conciliate his wife and preserve the kingdom, is said to have assented to yield up the unfortunate prince.[1] Without loss of time, therefore, a secret messenger conveyed to

[1] Speed, Holinshed, Warrington, Dr. Henry.

Ostorius Scapula the tidings of the important prisoner awaiting his disposal.[1]

Some authors have endeavoured to increase the odium which this act has fixed on the memory of the Queen, by attributing it to the envy she felt towards the Picts, whom she desired to behold in the same state of thraldom as her own countrymen, the Britons. Others have ascribed the act to the vanity of her ambition to shine as a powerful ally of Rome, and a hope of aggrandizement, to which she sacrificed all the better feelings of her nature; be this as it may, certain it is that the Romans overwhelmed her with favours in consequence. Cartismandua is accused of having thrown Caractacus, chained, into prison; but it is to be hoped that those writers are correct who state, that the first fetters which bound the person and wrung the soul of the heroic victim were those with which he was bound by the Romans, a strong party of whom were instantly dispatched, who, coming secretly and suddenly on Caractacus, seized the wounded hero, and conveyed him to the presence of Ostorius. Unconquered even then, the chief addressed these words to the Roman general: "I have been beaten, and lost my liberty, rather through my perfidious step-mother's deceit than the strength of thy arms; it is my duty to submit to the conqueror; but remember thine is, to follow the laws of clemency." Ostorius asking him in what manner he should use him, "In the same," answered Caractacus, "as thou wouldst wish to be used, if thou wert my prisoner."[2]

The joy of the Romans at this unexpected piece of good fortune was unbounded; the unfortunate King was sent, with his whole family, to Rome, to grace their triumph; and ornaments of honour were decreed to Ostorius, who still remained in Britain.[3]

[1] Scott, &c. [2] Pineda's History of the Brigantes. [3] Dr. Henry.

Let us consider next the consequences of giving up Caractacus, to Cartismandua herself.

In the first place, the infamous deed drew upon the Queen and her husband the hatred of the whole British people ;[2] but they were obliged to suppress their feelings, for Venusius and Cartismandua were under the all-powerful protection of the Roman Empire; their indignation did not, however, less fiercely burn to avenge the injuries of Caractacus. Loaded with benefits, the treacherous sovereigns for a time had cause for apparent rejoicing in the success of their perfidy, if wealth and power were the aim of the step they had taken. Cartismandua beheld herself raised to a pinnacle of greatness unknown in Britain before her times; her pride is thought to have risen with her fortunes, and she became dazzled by the sunshine of such great prosperity. Luxury seemed now her sole aim, and its necessary corruption followed.[1]

The just jealousy of Venusius had been awakened by the levity Cartismandua displayed in her conduct towards one of her own or her husband's train, a shield-bearer, called Vellocatus.[3] Cartismandua is said to have taken advantage of her husband's displeasure, to execute an intention which she had long fostered, to abandon him altogether; an open separation was at once effected, and the Queen, careless of opinion, set no bounds to her will, and in defiance of all decency, espoused the armour-bearer in public, either according to Roman or British custom, after which she caused her new spouse to be proclaimed king.[4] The reasons that induced Cartismandua

[1] Camden says, that the yielding Caractacus up to the Romans, obtained wealth from them for the Queen, as though she had *sold him over to his enemies;* that this wealth procured luxury, which led to all the evils which followed.

[2] Milton. [3] Lappenberg.

[4] Henry, Malcolm, Lewis, Holinshed, Tacitus, Milton, Stowe.

thus to degrade her dignity are unknown, nor is it conjectured how Venusius, whose noble qualities, except in one instance, were generally admitted, could so suddenly have become hateful to her; the Queen's heart seems to have been changed, and the elevation of fortune to which she had of late attained by unworthy means, altogether destroyed her former principle.

The last act of Cartismandua, the elevating Vellocatus to the supreme dignity, proved the ruin of herself and family; it exasperated the people to such a degree, that the whole kingdom was in commotion. Venusius was by all parties esteemed the lawful husband of Cartismandua, and so general was the abhorrence felt at the conduct of the Queen, that they scorned to be ruled by her, and resolved to support her injured husband's right to the throne.[1] The neighbouring states supported this determination, being, as well as the Brigantes, jealous of the ambition and authority of Cartismandua.[2]

The flower of the British youth, having assembled under the conduct of Venusius, attacked the Queen in the heart of her own territories, of which the chief city had declared for Venusius.[3] This unexpected defection in her own subjects was fatal to the Queen's cause. After many sharp encounters she was reduced to such extremities, as to be on the point of falling into the hands of the brave warrior whom she had so much injured. To escape was impossible; no alternative remained, but to apply for help to the Romans, and to them Cartismandua knew her appeal would not be in vain; in fact, the experience of her Roman allies had already caused them to foresee the danger into which the Queen had now fallen. At Cartismandua's request, some bands of horse and foot soldiers were sent to her aid. Several encounters took place between

[1] Malcolm, Lewis, Speed. [2] Tacitus, Holinshed. [3] Camden.

the Roman forces and those of the Queen's enemies; but the former at last prevailed, and were enabled to deliver the Queen from her perilous situation: her person was saved, but she was forced to yield up the possession of her kingdom to Venusius.

The war which domestic dissensions had begun, now involved the foreign foe: up to this time Venusius, who had lived in amity with his Queen, had respected and been respected by the Romans, her friends and allies;[1] now that they openly protected her against his interest, his resentment was unbounded, and he, from this period, vowed vengeance on Rome; and though he had only taken up arms to avenge his own wrongs, he henceforth resolved to engage in a war of hatred against the powerful Roman Empire.[2] The struggle, henceforward, was not for liberty, but for vengeance; and Venusius gave his skilful enemies unexpected trouble.[3] During the three years which ensued, we have no more mention of Cartismandua, who probably had sought shelter and protection at Camalodunum. with her great allies. Her security was, however, shortly endangered; for the camp which Ostorius had established amidst the Silures (the general still persevering in his design of erecting the chain of forts between the Nen and the Severn) was attacked by the Britons in a body, who surrounded the officer commanding the legionary cohorts, and, but for sudden succour from the neighbouring garrisons, would have cut to pieces the whole corps. As it was, the præfect of the camp, with eight centurions and the bravest of the soldiers, was killed on the spot.[4] These and other reverses exasperated and harassed Ostorius, while the Briton's fiercest wrath was aroused by hearing

[1] Tacitus.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Milton.
[4] Tacitus.

that he had declared he would extirpate the very name of the Silures. A foraging-party of Romans, and the detachment sent to their support, were soon after put to the rout, and two whole auxiliary cohorts, sent in quest of plunder, became prisoners of war to the fierce Britons. Overcome by the continued anxiety of this varying war, Ostorius sunk with fatigue, A.D. 55, when Aulus Didius was appointed to the command of the Roman forces in the island.[1]

During the interval which preceded the arrival of Didius, Manlius Valens, and the legion he commanded, had hazarded a battle, in which they were defeated by the Silures.[2] The first step taken by the new general was to invade the territories of Corbred, King of Scots, who had succeeded to the crown on the imprisonment of his brother Caractacus, and till this time had preserved amity with Rome. This step was taken at the express request of Queen Cartismandua.

The territory of the Picts, or the borders of Scotland, had been assigned to Caractacus for his life, and when that chieftain died, the Romans laid claim to it as reverting to them. This was represented to the Scottish King, who, at the head of an army, had advanced to the scene of warfare, by a herald from Aulus Didius, who ordered the inhabitants of Galloway to depart from that district, and make way for the Romans. The herald of haughty Rome would have been put to death, but was spared out of regard to the laws of arms. Scarcely was the message received, when Corbred learnt that Cæsius Nasica had entered Galloway with a Roman

[1] "Didius was a tame, inactive officer, whose great age prevented his performing anything remarkable in the war; indeed, he never risked his own person in any single engagement, but acted by the medium of his officers, content to keep the enemy in subjection, without seeking to add further honours to those he had before accumulated."—*Tacitus.*

[2] Tacitus.

legion, to the great terror of the inhabitants,[1] who, in the engagement which ensued, were defeated by their skilful enemies.

Corbred, who had distributed his men in several castles and fortresses for better security, advanced to Epiake, to obtain advice and assistance from Venusius. He took possession of that city, and left the Brigantes to defend it against their mutual foes.

At this juncture, Queen Cartismandua contrived, by some stratagem, to seize the persons of Venusius, his brother, and several of his family, whom she threw into prison at Epiake; by which one would infer that a party in her favour had still existed among her own people. It is said that the Queen was induced to hazard this daring step, to prevent her husband and his family assisting the Scotch King, as had been stipulated by the late alliance made with Corbred. It would seem that Venusius himself must have afterwards escaped, as he appears, soon after, opposing Cartismandua in a sharp engagement, in which the Queen, aided by her Roman allies, came off victorious. On this last event, the brave warrior certainly fell into the hands of his relentless wife. Historians relate, that when Corbred heard the tidings of what had befallen Venusius and his family, he hastily retreated towards Epiake.[2] Finding, however, upon his return there, that the cause of Cartismandua was nearly desperate, and that she had resolved to put her prisoners to death,[3] his arrival became the signal of triumph over the fated Queen, who was now in his power; and her enemies were released. The punishment inflicted by the Scottish King on Cartismandua, which immediately followed, marks how deeply he had felt injured by the wrongs of his brother Caractacus,

[1] Scott, Holinshed, &c. [2] Scott, Guthrie, Holinshed.
[3] Camden.

who, like himself, was her step-son, both being children of Cadallan, her former husband.

It appears that Cartismandua was immured alive; her advanced age unconsidered and unpitied. This horrible though deserved death is an indication of the spirit of the times, in which such savage vengeance was considered virtue. From her birth to her grave, Cartismandua's life had been one of vicissitude and irritation. The exile of her father, and loss of his dominions, her marriage and return to Britain, which she looked upon as in itself an exile; the fatal disobedience of her son Adminius, the disaffection of Guiderius and Arviragus from the Roman interest, in which her own was bound up, and the union of her daughter with the declared enemy of Rome; all these events must have filled the heart of the Queen with constant agitations, while the necessary struggles to maintain her power kept her in ceaseless action and alarm; till, at length, the unprecedented step she was led into by her ungoverned will, cancelled all her former triumphs, and covered her with disgrace and ruin.

After his signal act of vengeance, Corbred advanced against Cæsius Nasica, whose forces he routed; and from that time forward, an unremitting and successful war was carried on against the Romans, the Brigantes remaining unsubdued during the whole reign of Vespasian.

BOADICEA "THE WARLIKE."

"War! war! no peace! peace is to me a war!"

CONTENTS:

The Pictish princes—Cadallan—Metallanus—Boadicea's claims on British sympathy—British mothers—The Castle of Maidens—Education—Marriage and wrongs of Boadicea—Caractacus rouses himself—Arviragus throws off the Roman yoke—Defeat of the Britons—Roman triumph—Will of Prasutagus—Manner in which it was respected—Seneca as usurer—Outrages of the Romans—Rage and grief of the Britons—Boadicea's resolve—Corbred moved to help her—Insolent answer of the Romans—Taking of Mona—Boadicea's magnificent speech and prayer to Adraste—The hare—Preparations for the fight—Camalodunum—Omens—Fate of the city—Successes—Cruelties—St. Albans taken—The Wheel of Fortune turns—Reaction—Defeat of the Britons—Death of the Queen.

THE disastrous fortunes of Boadicea have furnished a theme for many an historian and poet; and a more dramatic subject could scarcely be discovered throughout the whole of our British annals: as a wife, a queen, a patriot, and a mother, Boadicea was for her heroism in misfortunes unequalled. Spencer, commenting upon the surname of "Victorious," bestowed upon this ill-fated Queen by the Britons, says she was one—

> "Who, whiles good-fortune favoured her might,
> Triumphed oft against her enemies;
> And yet, though overcome in haplesse fight,
> She triumphed o'er death in ennemis despight."
>
> *Faerie Queene.*

Little indeed in accordance with the actual history of Boadicea was that triumphant title: her misfortunes might rather, like Priam's, have given her a right to the sad distinction he claimed—

"The first of men in sovereign misery."

Who has not felt sympathy for

"—— The British warrior-queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods;"

and with tears of commiseration followed her, when she

"Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods!"

The word "Boadicea" is variously written—Bonduca, or Voadicea, or Woda, the letters b and v being used indiscriminately, as in Spanish, by British writers; according to one commentator, "the woman of the sword" is the real meaning of the term; others say that the really British name was Aregwedd Buddig, or "the Victorious," "Buddig"[1] being "Boo Tika" upon the coins of the Queen.

The mother of Boadicea, Europeia, was a daughter of King Evenus II., and a descendant of Agasia, princess of Britain.[2] Through her, Boadicea might, as King Henry VII. long afterwards did, have laid claim to the honours of a royal Trojan ancestry; on the side of her father also, who boasted himself the descendant of Scota, she derived her origin from the Egyptian monarchs.[3] If this exalted birth could confer

[1] "Beadaighe." The word "Buddig" is preserved in an ancient poem, in conjunction with those of Beli the Great and Mynogan, his predecessor.—*Rev. P. Roberts.*

[2] Tacitus, Speed, Guthrie, Anderson, and Nesbitt.

[3] See Rev. P. Roberts on the Early History of the Cymri, or Ancient Britons.

happiness, how brilliant and glad might have been the destiny of Boadicea!

The family of Boadicea had early become distinguished by its fidelity to the throne. Cadallus, her grandfather, had signalized himself by his protection of the infant children of Durstus and Agasia, during the period they were excluded from the succession on account of their minority; when one of these young princes became king, as Evenus II., Cadallus filled the office of Regent.

The gratitude of Evenus caused him to reward this tried and faithful friend by the gift of the territory of Brigantia, together with other estates; and when, after the death of Cadallus, dissensions arose among his sons as to the division of their patrimonial inheritance, the King himself undertook to adjust their difference. To the eldest son, Cadallan, afterwards the father of Boadicea, he awarded the greater part of the family estates in Brigantia, with supreme authority over the rest; constituting, in fact, a sort of petty sovereignty. Angus was apportioned to the second son, and the remainder of Brigantia to the third: after which, the Scottish King, in person, proceeded to Epiake, where, in the most conspicuous part of the city he caused a statue, in honour of his departed friend, to be erected.[1]

Cadallan, who was married to Europeia, niece of King Ederus, the next prince who sat on the throne, fixed his residence at Carictonium, in the county of Carrick, and there several of his children were born. As the sons of Pictish princesses inherited the crown by right of their mother, it was thought that Cadallan aspired to the supplanting of the young monarch to whom he had been appointed guardian, but he gave a

[1] Pineda, Boetius, Polydore Virgil, Holinshed.

very convincing proof of the uprightness of his intentions in that respect.

The King, for his vices, had been thrown into prison by the people; and one of the persons about the court, under the impression that he might gain favour with Cadallan, secretly entered the dungeon and assassinated him. The Regent, filled with horror and indignation, put the murderer to death for the crime, and instead of availing himself of this event for an act of treason, instantly proclaimed Metallanus, his wife's brother, king. This prince possessed a character totally different from his predecessor, and swayed the sceptre for the space of thirty years in undisturbed peace and harmony.

During the reign of Metallanus, Cadallan, who had lost his wife Europeia, entered into a second alliance; the lady whom he selected was Cartismandua, [1] widow of Cymbeline, the deceased King of the Britons, whose eventful life has just been related in this work.

At the period of her second marriage, Cartismandua, as has been shown, had a numerous family by her first husband. The family of Cadallan consisted of three sons and a daughter; of these Caractacus was the eldest, the daughter was Boadicea.

This princess has the highest claims on British sympathy, from the fact of her having been born, nursed, and bred among her countrymen. She had no leaning to the Roman invaders of the soil; Britain alone had her heart; and the freedom of her country, for which women, as well as men, in her time lived and died, was her ambition.

[1] The date of this marriage cannot be very easily determined: it occurred between the years 2 and 29. Cymbeline died A.D. 2, and Metallanus in 29, who is expressly stated to have survived Cadallan; but the date of Cadallan's second marriage and that of his death are undiscovered.

Her mother's country was the *southern* portion of Scotland, now known as the Lowlands; consequently the habits and manners of those people governed her education and character, and the sentiments displayed throughout her after-life, were caught from those associations.

Among the ancient women of Britain it was a thing to cause suspicion of a wife's fidelity, if her child were reared by any other than the mother. The British matron did not consider it fostered with due care, unless nursed at her own bosom; for she would have dreaded a degeneration from the parents, as well as danger to the infant's life.[1] On the birth of a son, it was usual for the mother to place the first food on the point of her husband's sword, and to insert it in the child's mouth; at the same time she offered a devout prayer to the gods of her country, that the babe might at some future period end his life amidst the swords and javelins of his enemies on the field of battle.[2] We are not actually told that a female child was desired to share the same fate; but as in those days women ever attended upon the warlike expeditions of their husbands, there is little doubt but that the spirit with which Boadicea the Warlike was reared, tended to the same purpose.

In the Isle of Skye, a famous fortress existed in those times, in which the use of arms was taught by a woman; it was called Dun Sgathach; but the scene of the education of the princesses of the Pictish nation, was the celebrated Castle of Maydens, situated in the vicinity of Holyrood House, Edinburgh. Camden, after describing that monastery, proceeds to state that over the edifice, "within a park well stocked with deer, hares, and conies, hangs a mountain with two tops,

[1] Holinshed. [2] Solinus.

called Arthur's Chair, from Arthur the Briton. On the west side, there mounts up a rock to a mighty height, steep and inaccessible on all sides but that which looks towards the city, upon which stands a castle, so strongly fortified with a great number of towers, that it is looked upon as impregnable. This the Britons called 'Castle Myned Agned,' and the Scots, 'The Maiden's Castle,' and 'The Virgin's Castle,' because the maiden princesses of the blood-royal of the Picts were kept here."[1]

"Here were the daughters and grand-daughters of Pictish monarchs kept in strait custody, and appointed to learn to sewe and worke, till they came to years of marriage."[2] The study of warlike achievements was, therefore, not the only occupation of the female sex.

There is much interest in inquiring into the kind of implements made use of in this primitive condition of society. The ancient British needle was made of

[1] The Castle of Maidens, afterwards called Edenburgh, from Aidan, one of the Scottish kings, was built by the same British king who founded the city of York, whence we discover him to have been of the Pictish race. He was named Ebranke; and the town of York, where his remains reposed, was formerly denominated Caer Ebranke, or Eboracum. From Maiden Castle in Stanmore, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, ran the old military way, called the Maiden Way, because it began at Maiden Castle, and which passed through the ancient town of which the vast ruins yet remaining below Kirkby Thore, in Westmoreland,* are called by the people there *Whely Castle*. This old town is about 300 yards in length and 150 in breadth and has three entrances on each side, with bulwarks before them, Roman urns and coins are frequently dug up there.—*Ency. Brit.*

About a mile from Dunstable, in Bedfordshire, is the encampment called Maiden Bower, 2,500 feet in circumference, environed by a ditch and a rampart. Near Leighton Buzzard is a similar one; and on the road from Bedford to Eaton Socon a third may be discerned. See Camden.

[2] Holinshed.

* North-west of Appleby, upon the river Eden.

bone, and resembled that used for the heads of arrows. The Welsh word "Nedwydd" literally implies, sharp-pointed wood; the British word "Gwaell" signifies a needle, bodkin, skewer, or broche, and singularly enough is a denomination made use of for several bones; thus "Gwaell y goes" is the spindle-bone of the leg, and "Gwaell yr Yswydd," the shoulderblade-bone, which perhaps was split for needles or bodkins.[1]

With the rude implements described, the skins of animals which had been killed in the chase[2] were sewn together, either with leathern thongs or vegetable fibres.

Another favourite employment of the early British maiden, was that of weaving baskets, and the structure of these baskets was so much admired by the Romans, that they not only introduced them into Italy, but even adopted the British name for the *bascawd*, terming them *bascaudæ*.[3] The daughters of modern England and Scotland, who are so familiarly acquainted with the many domestic uses of the basket, must not forget that they owe its invention to the native island maidens who preceded them, nineteen centuries ago. Amongst these, no doubt, was the royal Boadicea, who was instructed in all such feminine accomplishments as existed in her time. Nor are we left wholly in ignorance of the associates of her infancy, for several Pictish princesses of that date are noticed by our historians. These were Crifanga and Nairia, who were both daughters of Pictish monarchs. The first lady married, in A.D. 15, Lugad Ribdearg, King of Ireland, who had by his second queen, Devorgilla, a son, named Crimthan.[4]

[1] Smith and Meyrick: Costumes of Ancient Britons. This work refers to the Archæologia for some pictures of these bone needles.

[2] Smith. [3] Hope's Essays, &c.

[4] The death of Devorgilla, mother of Crimthan, who was a

This Crimthan subsequently married Nairia, daughter of Laoch, another Pictish king, and assumed from his wife the surname of Niadhnar.[1] It was usual for Pictish princes to assume the name of their wife or mother, from the custom which existed among them of conveying the hereditary rights of their monarchs through the female line. On the death of the king, a new member of the royal family was selected for his successor, who always laid claim to the throne "by the spindle side," and was presented to the people as his *mother's* heir.[2] It seems probable that some connexion existed between one or both these princesses with Boadicea, as at a subsequent period, Crimthan, step-son of the former, and husband to the latter, made himself conspicuous for an expedition into Britain to aid his friends and relatives, the Picts and Scots, against their formidable enemies, the Romans. He is said to have returned to Ireland laden with the spoils of the Roman legions, amongst which were "a suit of armour, embossed with gold and gems, a military cloak with golden fringe, a sword with figures of serpents upon it in chased gold, and a brace of greyhounds joined together by a silver chain, of which the price was estimated, according to the primitive custom of barter, at the value of three hundred cows."[3]

Boadicea had very early lost her mother, and was destined to be deprived of her other surviving parent; a particularly trying circumstance for her, as it placed her more completely under the influence of her haughty step-mother Cartismandua. This position must have

princess of Denmark, and Lugad's second wife, so affected that prince that he put a period to his own existence. O'Flaherty, O'Halloran, Warner, Keating.

[1] O'Flaherty. [2] Palgrave's Saxon Commonwealth.

[3] Moore's History of Ireland.

had a powerful influence on her after-life. Another important event, which happened A.D. 29, was the death of her uncle, King Metallanus, who leaving no children, the race of Fergus became extinct, and the crown was adjudged to Caractacus, son of Europeia, the King's sister.[1]

On the elevation of Caractacus to the throne, the ambitious Cartismandua sent to negociate with that king and his sister, the alliances which united in one firm and double tie the royal family of North and South Britain; it was probably about the same time that the Princess Boadicea became united in marriage to Arviragus, the third son of Cartismandua. Through her children, the Queen of the Brigantes might thus control both extremes of the country, and her own individual power was by no means limited as leader of the mighty people which formed a barrier between the two.

The Iceni were the people over whom Arviragus ruled; they are named by Tacitus as being very rich and prosperous, and had been unshaken by the war with the Romans.

The country of the Iceni was divided between the Magni and Coritani, who possessed all the country from the Stour in Essex to the banks of the Humber and the Don. Caistor, near Norwich, was the capital town of the Iceni Magni, who dwelt between the Stour and the Nen. On the other hand Leicester, called Ragæ, was the capital of the Iceni Coritani, who dwelt between the Nen and the Humber and Don.[2]

Amongst these people were two Roman stations, Camborita or Cambridge, amongst the Magni; and another at Lincta or Lincoln, amongst the Coritani;

[1] Duncan's History of Scotland. Caractacus became king A.D. 28. Holinshed.

Hoare's Notes on Giraldus Cambrensis.

and so late as A.D. 48, the people preserved their friendship with Rome. Probably this was owing to the rule of Cymbeline, and doubtless his widow and children had endeavoured to maintain the good understanding which existed. The Trinobantes and Cassii being their southern neighbours, and the Brigantes those to the north, assisted in preserving this state of peace, those nations being allies of Rome. The Carbanii adjoined them on the west.[1]

Arviragus and Boadicea, it appears, resided at Norwich, which city was termed by the Romans "Venta Icenorum," the "Winchester" or royal city of the Iceni. A Roman castle, about three miles distant, was supposed to have been built by Cæsar.[2]

For some years after the marriage of Boadicea, we gain no further information respecting her than that she became the mother of two daughters and a son, who were educated in Britain; and with them was brought up a son of one of the brothers of Boadicea, who was surnamed Galgacus or Galdus, from the circumstance of his living among strangers, and who afterwards became a distinguished personage.

The circumstances attending the arrival of the Emperor Claudius in Britain have been already related, and the separation of Arviragus and Boadicea. The object of the Romans was to disunite the British princes, the better to establish their power. They wished to divide Arviragus from the Scottish interest, and with this view the daughter of Claudius had been proposed for his wife. Aulus Plautius is said to have first suggested the measure.[3] Arviragus consulted with his Britons, and their consent gained, peace was made

[1] Hoare. [2] Parkins's Norwich.
[3] Holinshed. Grafton's Chronicle.

between the British king and Roman emperor. Deputies were sent to Rome for the princess, and the unfortunate Boadicea, on pretence of some "private ground for displeasure," was formally divorced from her husband, and with her children, placed in confinement, where, to add to her grief, one of them died. This unjust proceeding was deeply resented by the Britons, to whom Boadicea was dear; the story of her wrongs roused every heart in the kingdom. It was not the least felt by the heroic King of Scotland, who hastened to rescue his beloved sister from her ignominious and unmerited thraldom.

Boadicea was, probably, confined in the capital of her own dominions, viz., Norwich; otherwise, the scheme which was adopted by Caractacus might not have been so successful. The Britons, placing themselves under arms, are said to have forcibly carried off the Queen and her children from their prison, and conveyed them into Wales to the protection of Caractacus, to whom a great portion of that country belonged, for he is particularly denominated King of the Silures by some historians. This people inhabited Wales and the Marches, and at this time Shrewsbury was one of their chief towns. That this was the heart of the territories of Caractacus in South Britain, appears from its neighbourhood afterwards being the place of his final defeat.[1] Here, then, Boadicea was received by one who was her faithful friend in adversity, and the meeting of such a brother and sister under circumstances like theirs may easily be conceived. The indignation of Caractacus, once aroused against the Romans, was destined to be felt by them without cessation for a long series of years:[2] at present their measures were entered into and determined upon

[1] Holinshed. [2] Tacitus.

in relation to the future only, for they waited the result of impending events.

The next summer brought to Britain the Roman princess, who was formally united to Arviragus; and as if no measure should be neglected to gratify the Romans, and insult the discarded Queen, it was determined in council that the children of Arviragus, by his first marriage, should be excluded from the succession, and that the regal power should devolve on the offspring of the present marriage.

After the unsuccessful battle fought by the friends of Boadicea, when the Roman chiefs and Arviragus retired to London, Caractacus retreated first to York, and afterwards to Carrick. Thither an embassy from Plautius followed him, demanding the reason of his opposition to the Roman authority. Caractacus's answer was, that he had just cause for his conduct in the injuries that his sister Boadicea, and her son Guiderius, had sustained, and were likely to sustain, through their council and means; and so little was he disposed to make any amends for what was done that he thought it more reasonable that the Romans should quit the island of Britain, unless they had made up their minds to have not only the Britons, but the Picts and Scots, for their perpetual enemies, if only for the defence of their ancient liberty and freedom. The Roman ambassadors having returned with this answer, Plautius was highly indignant, and threatened revenge on the author of such high and contumelious language against the majesty of the Roman empire.[1]

Things being arranged to the satisfaction of the Roman Emperor, Claudius returned to Rome, leaving Arviragus in possession of the sovereignty—if such it could be called under the present circumstances, his

[1] Holinshed.

Queen being a Roman, and her allies, Aulus Plautius and his forces, having a sort of military rule under him, in which he was compelled to acquiesce. Arviragus, however, for a time preserved his faith. He even united with the Roman general to chastise the Britons for the abduction of Boadicea, against whom a battle was fought; but the Queen's adherents being overthrown, the affection for her was such that the very next day the people of Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Derbyshire flew to arms, and the Roman force, with the two leaders, Arviragus and Plautius, was compelled to retreat to London, lest an escape to the continent should be necessary; and in the emergency, Plautius sent to Rome for two more legions to support his authority.[1]

These events were followed by a general meeting of the friends of Boadicea, at Shrewsbury, in which Caractacus was invested with the sole command of the forces to be raised among the Britons, Scots, and Picts. In the following spring the hosts of these three nations were collected in Yorkshire, to make another struggle in favour of the Scottish princess. After a sanguinary contest, Arviragus and Plautius again retreated on London, and Caractacus and his friends to York, and thence to Epiake. The Roman general sent soon afterwards an embassy to Caractacus, which received the haughty answer suggested by the freedom of spirit in which Caractacus had been brought up.

[1] Caractacus, King of Scots, was elected chieftain in this war, undertaken in his sister's defence,* by the general desire of the people, and promised to join the allied forces at Shrewsbury in the spring. Congist, King of the Picts, also added his friendly assistance at this juncture.†

* Holinshed. † Ibid.

After this, Arviragus suddenly assumed in his own person the sole command, disdaining the intervention of the Romans. Vespasian, afterwards Emperor, was sent over by Claudius to compel him to submit; that general laid siege to Exeter, where Arviragus, having come up with his forces, gave him battle, though no decided victory was gained on either side: the next day the King was reconciled to Vespasian by the interference of Queen Gwenissa; but afterwards deserting his wife, Arviragus fled to Shrewsbury, where a reconciliation took place between him and his much-injured Queen, Boadicea. The fate of Gwenissa belongs to her biography.

Arviragus once more on the British side, the affairs of Boadicea wore a more favourable aspect. The chiefs of Britain united their forces again in Yorkshire, but before an engagement could take place, Vespasian fell upon the army of confederates, and it was almost cut to pieces in spite of its brave defence. Arviragus himself was prevented only by his attendants from falling on his own sword; they carried him by main force from the field of battle. The Pictish King, who had joined in this struggle, beholding the destruction of his people, desired not to survive them; he threw away his arms and regal ornaments, and sitting down on a stone, as one distracted, was slain by some of the Romans who followed up the pursuit. Caractacus escaped into his own country.[1]

Vespasian next besieged Camelon, and forced it to surrender from famine: to that town had been carried the regal ornaments of the Pictish King, of which the Roman General secured possession.[2] They consisted of a crown, with other jewels; and we are told, that with these was a sword, which had a haft of gold and

[1] See Life of Gwenissa. [2] Holinshed.

purple scabbard, very finely wrought and carved, which Vespasian ever after wore with much pride in his wars.[1]

Camelon was now peopled with Romans by Vespasian, and endowed with the liberties and privileges of a Roman city. A temple to Claudius was built on the banks of the Carron, in which two statues were set up by order of the general, one of which represented Claudius, and the other the goddess Victoria. Vespasian subsequently marched into Galloway, and took possession of Carrick, where he received the oaths of allegiance of the people, who, till then, had held out in the cause of the Queen and liberty. It was probably to this town that King Arviragus came to meet the victorious Roman, to whom he had, with consent of his adherents, offered to submit upon honourable terms. Vespasian, on this occasion, desirous of humbling the pride of Arviragus, refused to make any terms, unless he would come in his own person, and in private attire; a condition probably more galling to him than any other which could have been imposed. Resistance was, however, useless. He divested himself of his royal costume and equipage, and, coming to Vespasian in the humble manner he had dictated, was not only pardoned, but restored to his former station. Hostages were, however, required for his fidelity, and a fine imposed, not only on every chief who had rebelled, but on every city which had joined in taking up arms against Rome. The British laws were abrogated, Roman ones were substituted, and a Roman judge was appointed over every province, for the preservation of peace and Roman discipline.

[1] Holinshed. When Arviragus threw off the Roman yoke, it is likely he fortified those places which were most convenient for their invasion, viz., Richborough, Walmer, Dover, and Hastings.—*Chronicles of Dover Monastery, printed in Leland's Collectanea.*

Arviragus is no more mentioned in history, except as an ally of the Romans, with whom, during the rest of his long life, he maintained terms, and even assumed the greatest respect for the Roman Senate. The fame of his valour effaced all beside in the Roman mind, now that he was subservient to the will of the strongest; and the poet Juvenal, who, in some complimentary verses addressed to the Emperor, mentions him thus:

> "Some captive king, thee, his new lord, shall own;
> Or, from his British chariot headlong thrown,
> The proud Arviragus comes tumbling down."

It was considered a subject of glory and triumph, even for the Roman Emperor to aspire to conquer or make captive this heroic chieftain.[1] Arviragus is said to have been more fierce in war than any of the princes, his contemporaries; yet, in peace, no one could be more mild or more jocose. He is said to have enacted new laws, and confirmed those of his ancestors, and to have distinguished himself for the princely munificence with which he rewarded persons of merit. His selfishness and cruelty to both his wives is lost in the turbulence then called bravery.

The next point which historians give us of Boadicea's history, unites her name with that of Prasutagus, King of the Iceni, her husband, who appears to be the same as Arviragus, King of the Iceni, and which name he seems to have borne after the death of his mother, Queen Cartismandua.[2] One circumstance might account for the new name of the King of the Britons: his second wife, Gwenissa, laid aside her Roman name, and adopted one purely British; and as it was usual among the ancient Britons, when they embraced the

[1] In compliment to Vespasian, for his valour displayed in Britain, on his return to Rome he was met by the Emperor without the gates of the city, who gave him the right hand as they walked,—a mark of very great esteem.

[2] Rapin.

faith of Christ, and were baptized, to adopt new names from the Greek, Latin, or Hebrew, it is not unlikely that the king adopted it when, with Gwenissa, he received the Christian faith. As the British word Gwerydd (for Arviragus) contains the basis of *viridis*, *green*, conveyed in the word Prasutagus, and the custom of Britain was to specify some particular colour in the name of the individual, this alone seems to set the question of identity, which has been raised, beyond further doubt.[1]

Arviragus, or Prasutagus, as we may now call him, anticipating the rapacity of the Romans, left, by his will, the Emperor Nero co-heir with his two daughters, making no mention whatever of Queen Boadicea; for the husband of Gwenissa, who, at her death, had left a son as her heir, could only hope by such a division as that made in the will to secure his family from injury.

No sooner, however, was he deceased, than the officers of Nero seized on his entire effects in their master's name, his kingdom was spoiled by the Roman centurions, his house ransacked by slaves, his kinsmen treated as captives of war, and the wealthiest of his subjects amongst the Iceni despoiled of their estates, under the pretext furnished by the will; this last injustice was done at the instigation of the colony settled at Camalodunum or Colchester, with whom the soldiers co-operated, hoping hereafter to be able to take the same license themselves; thus, many who had settled even in that city, were expelled from it on the same pretence. The temple erected to Claudius, appeared to those Britons who remained in Camalodunum, a badge

[1] There is some diversity of opinion as to the place of interment of this celebrated British monarch,—whether, as some relate, he was buried in the Temple of Claudius at Gloucester, or at London; nor is the exact date of his death specified.

of their eternal slavery, for the priests employed in it under pretence of religious services due there, wasted or embezzled every man's property for their own private use.[1] This was not enough for the cupidity of the oppressors. Catus Decianus, the Roman procurator, endeavoured to bring all the people's goods under a new confiscation, by disavowing the remitment of Claudius; fresh taxes were imposed on lands and cattle;[2] and to crown all, those Britons who had been drawn in by the rich philosopher Seneca, Nero's counsellor, to borrow vast sums of money under his promises of easy loan, and licence to repay at convenience, were suddenly compelled to repay all at once, with great extortion. Among the number of those who had entered into such a snare as to entangle themselves in debt to Seneca, was the father of Boadicea, who had obtained the money through Roman usurers.[3] "The King of the Iceni," as he is here called, would rather seem to have been Cymbeline or Venusius, than the brave Cadallan, father of Boadicea and Caractacus; and if either of these, the word "father" might be intended to signify "step-father;" it certainly was one of the three; and in any case, on the death of Arviragus, such a debt must necessarily devolve on Boadicea, as the representative of those princes. The unfortunate Queen, a widow, in the hands of merciless creditors and unrelenting enemies, vainly remonstrated against the injustice of their proceedings; at length, infuriated by her reproaches, and unrestrained by any feeling of humanity, the brutal soldiery to whom she was given up, encouraged by their more brutal leaders, subjected the ill-fated Boadicea to the common punishment of the scourge, while the fate of her unhappy daughters was

[1] Stowe, Echard, Milton. [2] Warrington.
[3] The amount due was forty sesterces.

even more hideous than her own. Their immortal wrongs blacken the page of history, which has no record so atrocious.[1] The tide of accumulated injuries was now at its height, and the fury of a whole nation burst forth in one overwhelming current, to overflow the land with the blood of enemies whom no laws had restrained.

Ages have passed by, yet the heart still bleeds at the record of this noble woman's wrongs. From the moment of this outrage, the heart of the Queen was deadened to all feelings but those of vengeance, stung with shame, crushed with unmerited disgrace, and bowed by agonies that found no name; while Boadicea resolved still to endure life, hateful as it had become to her, in the sole hope of wreaking a fearful vengeance which should atone for her unheard-of injuries.

No lack of sympathy was shown for the wrongs of Boadicea by her generous and loyal-hearted Britons. One and all, the inhabitants of the Roman colony of London excepted, determined to unite in freeing their country from the yoke of a people who could perpetrate such crimes, more hateful since the victims were the weak and defenceless. The injuries long oppressing themselves, had been, up to this time, endured; but this outrage armed them all in one common cause, and they felt that the hour for a final struggle had arrived. At this time the Roman writers themselves acknowledge that the violence and injustice of the Emperor's servants gave the Britons just cause to lay aside their private animosities, and aid their Queen in the recovery of their lost liberty. The daughter of Cadallan placed herself at the head of her devoted partisans, and the disunion which Cæsar had hailed as one of the happy causes of his success, was at once extinguished in the

[1] Tacitus, Stowe, Milton, Echard.

bosoms of the British chiefs; one spirit alone animating the mass—the desire to avenge the injuries of their Queen,—a cause which embraced the personal wrongs of each individual. But before the actual outbreak of the tremendous insurrection which filled all the Roman empire with amazement and consternation, secret councils were held by the chieftains to concert measures for their rebellion. Among these was Venusius, who with his party had warmly espoused the cause of Boadicea; and at these meetings the Queen is said to have personally addressed her faithful ministers on the subject of their mutual wrongs. One of the evils of the Roman yoke on which she insisted, was the introduction of vices unknown in Britain, except through the medium of those jesters and buffoons, whom their tyrants encouraged to corrupt the nation. These persons were employed, it would appear, in the theatres at Camalodunum and Caerleon,[1] which had become colonized by Romans, and where the novelty of such spectacles as theatrical shows or entertainments would create vast astonishment and admiration, and doubtless obtain many followers among the uninformed Britons. Boadicea, in her celebrated address to her noble chiefs, stigmatized these persons as "Rome's instruments and Britain's vipers;" remarking that "Tiberius, though extremely covetous, would have been glad to have made peace, and Nero would still have followed his fiddling trade at home, had not the discords of Britain been fomented and kept alive by his fiddlers here!" From this address we discover that there had been a party among the Britons in favour of Rome; and that this still existed appears from the Londoners withholding their support

[1] The remains of the Roman theatres are yet to be seen in some parts of Britain, as Caerleon, in Monmouthshire &c.

to the approaching insurrection, for which they were destined afterwards to suffer severely.

The Trinobantes, and neighbouring states, are said in the outset to have warmly espoused the cause of the Queen, and joined her with their forces. To these different states Boadicea had from time to time addressed herself, in epistles composed for the inhabitants of such towns and provinces as had united in resolving to throw off the Roman yoke, and which treated not only on that, but on other subjects of national importance; for the Queen, we are informed, was "well versed in letters,"[1] which is not surprising, as the Roman intercourse with this island had been long enough carried on to enable her to become acquainted with Latin forms of literature; and we find that in this early period the Britons were not only possessed of traditions, but had written records of their own affairs,[2]—the characters, indeed, being peculiar to their age, and the knowledge of them limited to the persons of highest rank only, and the Druids. Gildas, the British poet and historian, attributes the scarcity of British records to the artifice of their enemies, the Romans, who were anxious to destroy every memorial of past times with the Druidical religion, by whose ministers they were preserved.[3]

[1] Bale reckons both Arviragus and Boadicea among the authors of Britain.

[2] Gildas.

[3] Conquovar Mac Nessa, King of Ulster, A.D. 48, ordered the precepts of the Druids of Ireland to be committed to writing.—*Toland.*

"In private the ancient Scots were accustomed to use for writing, ciphers which did not resemble the letters of other nations, but rather the characters used by the Egyptians, being figures of animals made into the form of letters, as appears from the characters on the ancient tombs to this time; and though these ancient hieroglyphics are now lost, they have a kind of writing peculiar to themselves, which was once in common use, and those who have the ancient speech pronounce the aspirations and dipthongs better than any of the rest."—*Holinshed.*

The Queen had, in the first instance, dispatched a messenger to her brother Corbred, King of the Scots, father of Corbred Gald, the young prince whom she had herself nursed and educated at her own court, and who passed many years with Boadicea amid the chequered scenes of her eventful life.[1] She complained in bitter terms of the injuries inflicted on herself and her daughters, by which she, his only sister, had been brought to extreme misery, and assured him that the Britons were ready to arm in her cause. Corbred was deeply moved by these sad tidings. He sent a herald to Catus, the Roman general, requiring him to obtain reparation from those Romans who had so basely treated the British Princesses. If this was not done, the King declared he would himself be her avenger. The Roman general's reply was full of contempt and ridicule. He scornfully upbraided Corbred for interfering with the Roman officers' affairs, "who were above taking notice either of his sister or her daughters, and at liberty to treat them as other women, according to their pleasure."

Corbred, indignant at this new insolence, hesitated no longer, but making an alliance with the Picts and people of the Isle of Man, soon raised a strong body for the enterprise, intended to act with the forces raised by the Queen in her own behalf. But before these could form a junction, a sudden and unlooked-for event precipitated the rebellion into an outbreak. This event was the reduction of the Island of Mona[2] by Suetonius Paulinus, then head of the Roman forces in Britain. This celebrated general was sent to Britain in the year 61, by Nero, to take the command of the Roman forces. He was already distinguished for merit and military talent, and to this was joined the strongest impulses of

[1] Scott. [2] Anglesey.

ambition, for he had formed a determination that his successes in Britain should equal those of Corbulo in Armenia. To reduce the whole island was his ultimate aim. His first undertaking was, however, the reduction of the Ordovices, or people of North Wales. These were the inhabitants of the present counties of Denbigh, Carnarvon, Merioneth, and Montgomery.[1]

The Ordovices received that name at the time of their conquering Worcestershire, Warwickshire, and North Gloucestershire; it signified the "Great Huiccii," or "the Honourable Wices;" and after their expulsion thence, other British settlers in that part were called Wigantes or Huiccii.[2] This seems to be the people who were ranged under the standard of Venusius, who had warmly espoused the cause of Boadicea.

Agricola, at that time only twenty years of age, had accompanied Paulinus in his expedition against the Ordovices, and resided with him at his head-quarters. Under this great commander, the young warrior acquired that experience which, at a subsequent period, enabled him to accomplish the reduction of the island; the cherished hope of Suetonius himself, though he did not live to accomplish his high aim.

The people whom Suetonius had resolved to not only subdue, but extirpate and destroy, were brave, warlike, and devoted to their religion; the enterprise presented, therefore, very great difficulties: it was the more desirable to accomplish, because this spot, the court of ecclesiastical and civil justice, had become a rendezvous for every British malcontent. To enable himself more effectually to reduce this island, Suetonius withdrew the veteran soldiers from Camalodunum, little foreseeing the disastrous consequences which might arise from leaving so important a hold unprotected against their

[1] Life of Agricola. [2] Green's History of Worcester.

enemies. About this time, Petilius Cerealis[1] received from Nero an appointment in Britain, to occupy the place of Vettius Volanus, who, for his mildness of disposition, was recalled. Petilius was very unlike his predecessor: already distinguished as a skilful veteran, in the war against Civilis, the Batavian chief, he was well suited to propagate the terror of the Roman arms in Britain. Suetonius himself was also remarkable for his severity; so that the Britons were oppressed in every way. Such was the state of things when the Roman general penetrated for the first time as far as Mona, the seat of their mysterious worship, and now crowded with inhabitants, many of whom had sought its shelter as a last retreat.[2]

For the purpose of the intended invasion of the island, Suetonius caused ships to be made with flat bottoms, for a steep, uncertain shore. "In these the foot were conveyed over; the cavalry followed, by fording in shallow water, or swimming, and leading the horses. On the shore stood a motley troop of armed men, mixed with women running up and down among them, dressed like Furies, in *black garments*, their hair dishevelled, and torches in their hands. The Druids also attended, lifting up their hands to heaven, and uttering dreadful execrations. The novelty of the sight so struck the soldiers, that they stood as it were motionless, exposing themselves to the enemies' weapons, till, animated by the exhortations of their general, and encouraging one another not to fear an army of women and madmen, they advanced, bore down all they met, and involved them in their own fire. Garrisons were afterwards placed in the towns, and the groves, sacred to their bloody superstitions, cut down; for it was their

[1] Tacitus and Hume say that Petilius was first sent over A.D. 70.
[2] Tacitus.

practice to offer the blood of their prisoners on their altars, and consult the gods by the entrails of men." Such is the relation Tacitus gives of the taking of Mona; and the spot in Anglesey where Suetonius and his barbarous legions butchered the unoffending Druids is still shown at a ferry, called Porthamel, across the Menai Straits. The horrors of such a slaughter baffle description; men and women alike fell victims, and deluged their own altars with their blood. Suetonius expected, now that he had effected his object in reducing Mona, that the whole of Britain would be reduced to the Roman yoke; but he was altogether deceived in his calculation: while yet employed in arranging matters for the security of his new conquest, he received the alarming news that the whole country was in a state of revolt.

The tidings of what had been done by Suetonius Paulinus had become very quickly known through the island, and reached the ears of Boadicea. She saw that the moment was arrived for the decisive stroke. The veteran troops had been called from Camalodunum, to assist Suetonius in the reduction of Mona; and Boadicea perceived that the city might easily be taken by her forces. The Scottish succours from Corbred had not arrived; but the warlike Queen determined not to delay her intended plans for their arrival. Prior to the approaching contest, Boadicea, in conformity with the customs of her times, determined to encourage her followers, by addressing them on the subject of the strife in which they were about to engage. For this purpose she mounted an eminence raised of turf, from which she could be seen by the whole assembled multitude, amounting to as many as 80,000 men. The appearance of the Queen is said to have struck awe into the heart of each beholder, by the dignity and majesty

of her demeanour. In person, Boadicea was of the largest size, her face was beautiful, but fierce and stern; some annalists say, "terrible of aspect, savage of countenance." Her complexion was brilliantly fair,[1] and her yellow locks, which were spread all over her shoulders, reached down to her hips. She wore a plaited tunic of several colours, drawn close about her bosom, and over that a vestment made of some stuff of British manufacture, fastened by a clasp, and adopted in compliment to the southern natives; the chequered robe beneath being the produce of the north of Britain. About her neck she wore a thick collar, or chain of gold, esteemed a mark of the highest command, and expressive of the dignified quality of the wearer. She addressed the whole assembly, in a voice loud enough to reach the ears of the most distant of her eager auditors who crowded around her, many of whom were women.

Her speech was as follows:—

"My friends and faithful subjects,—I do believe that there is no man here who is ignorant how much freedom and poverty are preferable to bondage and wealth.

"Since the Romans have been acquainted with this

[1] The ancient British maidens were remarkable for a dazzling whiteness of skin, which, accompanied by a ruddy and florid complexion, was thought to be produced by the humidity of the climate.* Fedelmia was so noted for her fair complexion as to be surnamed "White as Silver." Carbrey Niafear, King of Leinster, in order to obtain the hand of this princess from her father, Conquovar Mac Nessa, King of Ulster, was compelled to cede a large portion of his territories. Three fruitful tracts of land, extending from Loch-au-Clioideagh and Tara to the sea were, by Carbrey's consent, annexed to the dominions of Conquovar, as his daughter's marriage settlement.† Boadicea, Claudia, and St. Helena, are especially noted for beauty of complexion.‡

* Xiphiline. † O'Flaherty, Keating. ‡ Xiphiline.

island, there is no indignity, however vile, no cruelty, however grievous, which we have not suffered.

"Are we not contemned and trodden under foot by those who have studied only to become our lords and tyrants? Are we not bereaved of our riches and possessions? Do we not till their land, and pay them all manner of tribute, even for our persons? Amongst other nations, death is a deliverance from slavery; but with the Romans, the dead do still live, even to augment their riches.[1]

"And can we hope for mercy at their hands, who have already treated us so barbarously? Even he who taketh a wild beast, will at first cherish it, and seek by gentleness to win it to familiarity. Are we not, then, the authors of our own misery, in suffering them to set foot in our island? We should have slain them afar off, and driven them back even as we did Cæsar.

"Better were it to lose our lives in defence of our country than to drag on a miserable existence in servitude.

"Wherefore, my well-beloved citizens, friends, and relations, let us, while the remembrance of our ancient liberty remains, seek to recover, not only the name of freedom, but the enjoyment of liberty itself. Let us set an example to posterity. Let us not forget what we have once been; for, if so, what can we expect of our children, brought up in misery and bondage?

"I do not recal these things to rouse you to rebellion,

[1] It is supposed that the expression in the speech of Boadicea (given by Dion Cassius) which refers to *taxation* thus—"We are forced to pay for the bodies of our very dead," relates to the impost of the Romans on those Britons buried according to national custom, instead of being burnt like the Romans; and that a high price was demanded for the privilege of burying the higher orders in their best garments, and laying by their side their axe and dagger, as we have often had instances in the opening of cromlechs,—a custom to which the Britons continued obstinately to adhere.

for I well know you sufficiently abhor the Roman name, neither do I seek to put you in fear of what might happen hereafter; but I would return my hearty thanks and commendations, that you do thus willingly obey my summons, unawed by your powerful oppressors, and proving yourselves prompt, zealous, and courageous, and willing to live or die for your Queen and country. Do our enemies outnumber us? Regard their strength. We do so much exceed them, that our army is strong as stone walls, and one of our targets is of more value than all the armour they bear. The victory will soon be ours. They must soon be our captives. Yet, should we lose the field, we may easily escape the calamities of a defeat; for their heavy arms will impede their pursuit, and the hills and marshes will intercept them.

"*We* can endure hunger, thirst, cold and sunshine; they live in tents or houses: baked meats, wine, and oil, are necessary to them; if these fail, or the summer sun oppress them, they languish and consume: but to us, every herb or root is meat, every juice an oil, water is pleasant wine, and every tree affords a habitation.[1]

"Besides this, the country is well known to us, and we have many friends; but the Romans are strangers, and without succour in case of need. We can swim over every river, naked or clad, while they require mighty ships to convey them.

"Let us then courageously attack them, and let us teach them that hares and foxes can never match with wolves and greyhounds."

At these words Boadicea released from beneath her mantle a hare, which had been purposely concealed;[2]

[1] Hares, fowls, geese, and fish, the Britons were by their religion forbidden to eat.

[2] The hare released by Boadicea is generally supposed to betoken the fearfulness of the Romans. The hare was used by the Britons for the purposes of divination; and though they never killed it for the table, from the delight which they took in

and the sight of this prognostic of success was received with loud shouts by the people, who hailed it with a loud shout, and vented freely their indignant feelings against the ill-treatment of their Queen.

Boadicea now recalled their attention, while she proceeded with her prayers or supplication; wherein she especially addressed herself to the deity of woman worshipped by the British people, under the name of Andate or Adraste, their Goddess of Victory;[1] and this appeal, as well as her former speech, is worthy of a more enlightened age.

"I thank thee, O Adraste," were the words she used, "and call upon thee, not as a ruler such as Messalina, as Agrippina, or as Nero, which last is called a man, but is indeed a woman; but I call upon thee as the goddess of our British warriors, whose wives are no less brave and valiant than themselves. I beseech thee, since I am Queen of this mighty people, to grant them health, liberty, and victory over the wicked, insatiable, and luxurious Romans, whose lives are devoted to covetousness and cruelty. Let not, I beseech thee, the tyranny of Nero and Domitian any longer prevail. That thou wilt be our helper, our defender and our saviour, I heartily beseech thee!"

At the conclusion of this dignified and affecting prayer, Boadicea departed to prepare for battle.

This appeal to Adraste, the female goddess, is ren-

breeding it, they kept numbers about the courts of their chiefs. The idea of a hare-warren, and the model of a park, were originally derived by us from the primeval Britons.* An instance of one of the warrens yet exists at Kimble, in Bucks, once the abode of King Cymbeline. The speech of the Queen seems to infer that the fox was also held in veneration by the people.

[1] Andate, or Andraste, was the British Goddess of Victory, who had a temple at Camalodunum, and to whom the Britons sacrificed their prisoners of war.—*Ancient Universal History, from Dio Cassius.*

* Whittaker's Manchester.

dered so much the more affecting, when we learn that no less than five thousand females had enlisted in the cause of their royal countrywoman, wholly bent to avenge her wrongs, or perish in the contest.[1] This was peculiarly meritorious, as every individual who went to the war with the sovereign, took his or her own expenses, the service being esteemed one of honour to those who engaged in it.[2] In those times the women had no less courage than the men, and on all occasions like the present, every stout British maiden or married woman, unless about to become a mother, marched with her husband and brothers to the defence of her country. Even the women advanced in years accompanied the army, encouraging the men to valour, and assailing the enemy on their approach with stones, while the younger of their sex fought among the ranks, side by side with the men. On departing for the strife, they had a religious custom of slaying the first living creature that they found, in whose blood they not only bathed their swords, but also tasted the same, in the assurance that they were about to obtain some great and noted victory. Many hoary priestesses followed the British armies, clad in white garments bound with a brazen girdle, and having their feet naked, whose office it was to sacrifice the prisoners of war, and by these victims predict the success of the strife. To render themselves competent to share the dangers of the field of battle, the British women laboured incessantly to equal the opposite sex in strength; despising alike heat and cold, they travelled barefoot or in rude carriages, and had their food trussed behind them on their horses or their own shoulders, never refusing to undergo any labour or fatigue assigned to them by their leader.[3]

[1] Holinshed. [2] Ibid.

[3] A woman of the Cimbri, rather than survive a defeat, would kill

The Britons, animated by the speech of their heroic Queen, set out against the Romans; Boadicea first attacking the colony of Camalodunum.[1]

The following account is given of the state of Camalodunum, which yet was incomplete, or in progress, and laid out, as will be seen, rather for pleasure than security, while it was rendered defenceless by the abstraction of its garrison of veterans:—"Camalodunum, the standing court or palace royal of their kings, while Cymbeline lived, was now become the centre of pleasant retirement to the Romans, not the rendezvous of their power. The outside state of the town seemed very flourishing; for, besides the old palace, and other buildings of the Britons (for the Romans, saith Segonius, did not use to destroy the buildings they found), it had a senate-house for consultations, *a theatre for plays*, that goodly Temple of Claudius, and undoubtedly, as well they as the rest,

even her own flying relatives, and having strangled her infant, and cast it beneath the chariot-wheels, ended the horrid scene by her own self-destruction. Lucius Antoninus, one of the Roman generals in Britain, in making application to Rome for fresh succours, stated that their enemies were never more cruel and fierce, not only the men, but also the women, who cared not for the loss of their own lives, so that they might die revenged.—*Holinshed.*

[1] This celebrated place, first taken by Claudius, A.D. 44, and garrisoned with veterans of the second, ninth, and fourteenth legions, had since that period been the seat of the Roman government, being sometimes also called Colonia, as appears from some money of Claudius, inscribed COL. CAMALODVN; and by medals the Emperor had struck in honour of his conquest, bearing on one side his own effigies, with the legend, "TI. CLAUD. CÆS. AUG. GER. P. M. T. R. P. XII., IMP. XIIX.;" and on the reverse a plough, drawn by an ox and a cow yoked, driven by a man; above them, "COL. CAMALODUNUM AUG." Plautius, the proprætor of Camalodunum, had been recalled A.D. 48, after which Ostorius Scæpula, his successor, had withdrawn the chief part of the veteran legions from the place; to which measure is attributable the destruction of the colony by Boadicea; because the Trinobantes, who had been awed by the presence of that military force, were thus encouraged to unite with the Queen's forces in their stroke for freedom.

answerable to the Roman magnificence. The colony lay open on all sides, the better to enjoy free walks and air about; yet safety was not altogether neglected, though pleasure was rather sought than strength.[1] It had no trench, no palisades, nor other defence about itselfe; but it had the majestie of the Roman name (a reputed wall of brass), the aire of a fresh conquest, and sundrie strength in the marches or pale of the province, where the Roman garrison watched and warded in castles, sconces, and other presidiary places."[2]

The city was, as may even yet be observed by the ancient remains, in a progressive and imperfect state, and on this account was chosen by the Britons as their first point of attack;[3] they had another and a still stronger reason, the great hatred they entertained for the veteran soldiers.

The inhabitants of the colony are said to have had warnings of their approaching ruin. A noise as if of contention was heard in the court, and a great tumult in the theatre, that scene of vicious entertainment which had been censured by Boadicea, in her address to the Britons; for she knew that they participated in these entertainments, and had become accustomed to intermingle familiarly with their former enemies. Perhaps the Druidesses were concerned in these supposed supernatural sounds—for such they were considered, "seeing that no man there either spake or mourned."[4] These weird priestesses seem to have been acquainted with the art of ventriloquism, and were in some of their mysteries accustomed to conceal themselves in certain

[1] According to Tacitus, "the Roman generals attended to improvements of taste or elegance, but neglected the useful. They embellished the province, but took no care to defend it."

[2] History of Colchester.

[3] Hoare. Notes on Giraldus Cambrensis.

[4] Tacitus, Speed.

recesses, and by giving forth sentences or sounds when invisible to their listeners, to create the utmost astonishment.[1] The signs of the approaching calamity, as viewed by the Romans of Camalodunum, prove them to have been quite as superstitious as their less-informed neighbours, the Britons. Certain houses or buildings, appearing like a colony in ruins, are said to have been seen in the river Thames, and the sea between the island and Gaul appeared to flow with blood.[2] To crown all these evil omens, the image of the goddess Victoria set up by Claudius, *without any apparent cause,* fell from its base, and lay extended on the ground, with its face averted, as if that deity yielded to the enemies of Rome. This last certainly looks much like a contrivance of the Druids, which is the more probable, as women are said to have rushed here and there, in restless ecstasy among the people, with frantic screams, denouncing impending ruin: "Destruction is at hand! destruction is at hand!" Such were the hideous clamours heard "*in a foreign accent,*"[3] which are said to have penetrated even into the very council-chamber of the Romans, filling their hearts with terror

[1] An oracular stone is mentioned by the author of the "Celtic Druids," known by the name of "the Great Cannon:" it rests upon a bed of rock, where a road plainly appears to have been made, leading to the hole, which at the entrance is three feet wide, six feet deep, and about three feet six inches high. Within this aperture on the right hand is a round hole, two feet diameter, perforated quite through the rock, sixteen feet, and running from south to north. In the above-mentioned aperture a man might be concealed, and predict future events to those that came to consult the oracle, and be heard distinctly on the north side of the rock, where the hole is not visible. This might make the credulous Britons think the predictions proceeded solely from the rock deity. The voice on the outside was distinctly conveyed to the person in the aperture, as was several times tried. The circumference of this rock is ninety-six feet.

[2] "The sea was purpled with blood, and at the ebb tide the figures of human bodies were traced on the sand."—*Tacitus.*

[3] Tacitus.

and dismay, so that they clearly perceived that secret enemies mixed in all their deliberations. Suddenly, while an undefined fear was on the people of Camalodunum, Boadicea, with her countless multitude, appeared before the place. The Romans had but a few soldiers, and in the utmost alarm, sent off to Catus Decianus, procurator of the province, for a reinforcement. That officer could spare only two hundred men, and those but half armed, to assist them in their great extremity. It appears, however, that the Temple of Claudius was strongly fortified, and there they resolved to make their stand, without, however, concerting any measures for their defence, being taken so entirely by surprise, from the profound peace which had seemed to exist around them prior to this unexpected assault, that neither palisade nor ditch was thrown up, nor were any of the women, the aged, or infirm, sent out of the garrison. The colony was therefore taken with ease, and laid waste with fire and sword; the temple, where the military had sought to secure themselves, was laid siege to by the Queen and her exulting chiefs, and after holding out for two days, was taken by storm. Such was the carnage, that it is computed not less than from 70,000 to 80,000 fell on the occasion, aged persons, women, and children, alike falling victims to the Britons' too just fury. It is necessary to the veracity of history to add, awful as the picture is to contemplate, that the mandates of carnage were given by the stern Queen herself. Her vengeance extended yet further, being, as is generally believed, excited by the conduct of Suetonius in Anglesey, on whom she was desirous of retorting, by her cruel justice; nor can the horrors of Paganism appear in darker colours, than the picture of this revenge.

Punishments, even for the women,[1] were invented, too hideous to be contemplated, that in nothing should the Romans be outdone in evil.

After this terrible sacrifice to vengeance, both the priests and warriors indulged in carousing and feasting in the wood called Andates, and in the several temples, especially that of the goddess Andate, invoked by Boadicea in her address. Boadicea then headed her warriors again and set forth in quest of further victory. It was, no doubt, by the great Roman road which led from Colchester through the middle of the county of Essex, towards Bishop Stortford, &c., in Hertfordshire, that Boadicea pursued her course. This way is, in modern days, known as Stane Street.

Petilius Cerealis, at the time when these dreadful occurrences took place, was at Verulam, and marching in haste thence towards Colchester, "to rescue that which was already lost," was encountered by the furious Britons.[2] The ninth legion, under the command of the renowned conqueror of Batavia, was routed, the foot-soldiers *all slain*, and Petilius himself, with his cavalry, was forced to escape to his camp for safety, where he entrenched himself for a time, "not daring to attempt anything farther." The pursuit was followed up with great slaughter, 6000 Romans being slain, and about 3000 of the confederate Britons. Catus, the procurator, was in the engagement, and, being wounded, made his escape into Gaul.[3]

[1] Of whom some of the noblest were treated by Boadicea, as they had been by Suetonius. Nero was in the end obliged to recal Suetonius, because he was considered an unfit person to compose the alarmed minds of the Britons, from having both permitted and inflicted so many cruelties.—*Hume.*

[2] The ninth legion had received an accession of force from Germany, of eight auxiliary *cohorts* and one thousand horse.—*Tacitus.*

[3] "At the bare tidings of the disasters encountered by the

After the conquest of Camalodunum, the Queen had been joined by the forces of her brother, the King of Scots, who had aided her in the defeat of Petilius[1] and his troops.

The successful Boadicea pursued her career towards Verulam, at that time a place of greater importance than London itself, the royal seat of Cassibelaunus; it had become a 'municipium' of the Romans. A municipium was very different from a colony, such as Camalodunum, which was a city from which the inhabitants were expelled, to make way for the new-comers;[2] it was an enfranchised city, which possessed every privilege of Roman citizens, "having senators, knights, and commons; magistrates and priests, censors, ediles, quæstors, and flamens."[3]

The devotion shown by the Britons of Verulam to their conquerors, had obtained for them this signal favour; and it was to punish them for this, and for their secession from the customs and religion of their ancestors, that Boadicea was induced to attack the town. Verulam had been compassed with walls by the Romans, and the great Watling Street, by which the warlike Queen had approached the place, passed quite through the city. The modern St. Albans has been erected within the limits of the ancient city; but though some portion of its walls were standing in the days of Holinshed, and by him described as substan-

Romans, Catus, like a tall man, took to his heels, and sailed into Gallia."—*Speed.* Posthumus, the camp-master, durst not resist Boadicea, and refused to fight against her; indeed such terror had she infused into her enemies, that this fear had become quite general."—*Tacitus.*

[1] Agricola served under Petilius "in an ordinary capacity,* and shared the common dangers of the war."† Petilius Cerealis had encountered the Brigantes in many battles, Venusius holding him at bay, and remaining to the last unconquered.‡

[2] Holinshed. [3] Pennant.

* A.D. 70. † Tacitus. ‡ Milton.

tially built, the modern ruins do not afford much information of the extent of the original foundations. Of the richness and beauty of the place, a better idea may be obtained from the researches made in the reign of the Saxon King Edgar, by Eldred, then Abbot of St. Albans, who was desirous of enlarging the religious establishment there, which had been founded by Offa, King of the Mercians. It occurred to the zealous prelate that some relics of the ancient Roman Verulam might be obtained, and on digging amid the ruins, he discovered a number of pillars, portions of antique work, thresholds, door-frames, and sundry other pieces of fine masonry for windows, &c., well adapted for the purpose of beautifying the religious structure he desired to adorn. Of these also, "some were of porphyrite stone, some of divers kinds of marble, touch, and alabaster, besides many curious devices of hard metal; in finding whereof, he thought himself an happy man, and his success to be greatly guided by St. Alban."[1] The good abbot also found "many pillars of brass, and sockets of latten, alabaster, and touch, all which he laid aside by great heaps, intending to employ them in laying the foundation of a new abbey, but died before he could commence the building."[2] The examination of the things already discovered by Eldred, was prosecuted by his successor, Abbot Eadmer, and led to a further search in the ancient walls of the city, which was rewarded by the discovery of numerous other pieces "of excellent workmanship." The emissaries of the abbot, in the progress of their researches, came to some vaults underground, "in which stood certain idols, and a number of altars, very superstitiously and religiously adorned, as the pagans had most probably left them in time of necessity. The images were formed of sundry

[1] Holinshed. [2] Ibid.

metals, and some of them of pure gold, and the altars were richly covered. Eadmer removed all the ornaments from the altars, and appropriated them to his own building, and destroyed an immense number of these idols, which were only admirable for beauty of construction, but unavailable in point of material. Many curious pots, jugs, and cruses of stone and wood were taken up by him, most artificially wrought and carved, with an immense quantity of household stuff, as if the whole furniture of the city had been brought thither for the purpose of being hid in the vaults." The spot of this singular discovery seems to have been used as a place of burial; for Eadmer is said to have found there pots of gold, silver, brass, glass, and earth, some of which were filled with ashes and bones, and the mouths turned downwards, which vessels being broken in pieces by the abbot, the metal was melted, and reserved for the purpose of garnishing the church.[1]

The fact of the discovery of such a quantity of rich furniture, in such a spot, is accounted for by the alarm which the people naturally felt on the approach of the Queen, after her recent successes. The wealth of the place is expressly mentioned as one of the causes for the attack of Boadicea, it being the site of one of the British Mints: the word VER may be distinguished on the coins, though the name of the reigning prince is not legible.[2]

This noble seat of Roman grandeur combined with British industry, shared the fate of Camalodunum, being laid waste with fire and sword;[3] and so general a

[1] Holinshed; who observes that "numbers of vessels of a similar kind, though of finer earth, of six or eight gallons a piece, were found, A.D. 1578, in a well at Little Massingham, in Norfolk: and also in Henry VIII.'s reign, containing old British coins and those of the Roman Emperors."

[2] Pennant.

[3] Girald. Cambrensis.

scene of carnage ensued, that the loss of the Romans and their allies, on the occasion, is said to have amounted to 70,000 men.[1] The fate of the municipium has been chronicled by the pen of Spenser, who, in character of the Genius of the place, says:—

"I was that city which the garland wore
Of Britain's pride, delivered unto me
By Roman victors, which it won of yore;
Though nought at all but ruins now I be,
And lie in mine own ashes, as ye see.
Verlame I was: what boots it what I was,
Sith now I am but weeds and wasteful grass?"

Ruins of Time.

It is necessary to turn from the footsteps of the ruthless Boadicea, and to trace the progress of the Roman general from Mona, where he was staying at the time of these signal losses.

Suetonius, on receiving news of these disasters, quitted Anglesey, and with the greatest intrepidity marched through a hostile country towards London,[2] by the great British road, called Watling Street,[3] which ran immediately from Wales by Wroxeter Wall, High Cross, Towcester, and Verulam, to London; and necessarily he was compelled to pass through the dominions of the Iceni in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.[4]

[1] Tacitus, Speed, C. Daniel, Howel.

[2] Giraldus Cambrensis.

[3] The noted Watling Street, which was the direct road from Chester (the City of the Legions) to Dover, did not enter London,* but in its course from Verulam, and Elstree or Snellamasis, crossed the Oxford road at Tyburn, and thence ran to the west of Westminster† over the Thames, and onward into Kent. From Tyburn this road proceeded over part of Hyde Park by May Fair, "through St. James's Park to the street by Old Palace Yard, called the Wool Staple, to the Thames; there formerly stood an old gate, one part of the arch of which is still left, but not Roman. On the opposite side of the river is Stane Gate Ferry, which is the continuation of this street to Canterbury, and so to the three famous sea-ports, Rutupiæ, Dubius, and Lemannis."

[4] Hoare's Notes on Girald. Cambrensis.

* Dr. Stukeley. † Higden.

Notwithstanding the many difficulties and dangers which necessarily attended this progress through a hostile country, Suetonius Paulinus succeeded in reaching London in safety.

The Roman general was at first doubtful, whether he should not fix on that place as the seat of the war; many considerations, however, deterred him; and the smallness of his own army, as well as the fatal temerity of Petilius, made him determine by the sacrifice of one province to secure the rest.[1] Vain were the prayers and tears of the wretched inhabitants, nothing could shake the resolution of Paulinus, or divert him from his plan, when once laid out in his own mind. The signal for a march was given, and those only were left behind who by advanced age or weakness could not follow.[2]

The Queen had not forgotten that in the season of her deepest sorrows, when all other Britons had flocked from every quarter of the island to her standard, the Londoners alone had hung back; this act had marked them out as objects of especial indignation and vengeance, and too soon was her wrath to fall on all that were found; she advanced upon the city, took it, and put to the sword all that were found. Thus had she well gained the surnames of "the Warlike" and "the Victorious!"

A change was, however, at hand; the wheel of fortune was turning, and the period that was to terminate her frantic vengeance was approaching. Suetonius, though he had forsaken the city of London, had not removed far distant, having encamped his forces in the neighbourhood, in a quadrangle of about 130 feet in extent.[3]

It was a moment of terrible excitement for the contending parties, when the respective leaders, prior to the contest which was to decide their fortunes, im-

[1] Girald. Cambrensis. [2] Tacitus, Speed.
[3] Hone's Every-Day Book.

pressed upon the multitudes who were assembled, their hopes of success and sentiments of patriotic courage and enthusiasm. With very different hopes were they inspired. The Queen's countless throng, elated with conquest, and certain of success, was without order of battle. Their wives and children were brought with them, as witnesses of their valour,[1] or assistants in the fight, while those intended as spectators only, were placed in waggons around the spot fixed on for their engagement. The waggons or carts used as land carriages by the Britons prior to the introduction of the conveniences and luxuries of life by the Romans, were thus employed in warlike expeditions, and the chariots they used as conveyances for travelling accommodation being rendered equally available both for peace and war. On the chariots of war, however, immense drums were constructed, by stretching skins over them, which emitted very powerful sounds.

The British chariots, called by them *Esseda*, and by Tacitus *Covini*, were guided by the principal warrior; the Britons esteeming it most honourable to drive the car into the thickest of the enemy's ranks, and to distinguish themselves by braving every danger: it was the custom for a number of combatants to mount together on the same vehicle. The practice of fighting in chariots, in use among the Britons, has been compared to that among the Trojans of old, as described by Homer; but this difference existed with the Greeks and Trojans, that the driver of the chariot was secondary in rank to the chief of high renown who fought.

In one of these warlike cars, such as we have described in the history of Cartismandua, appeared Boadicea and her two daughters, who sat before her. The Queen drove through the ranks of her faithful followers, and, in turn,

[1] Sharon Turner.

addressed herself to the several nations who had assembled in her behalf: "This was not," she said, "the first time that the Britons had been led to battle by a woman; but now she did not come to boast the pride of a long line of ancestry, nor even to recover her kingdom and the plundered wealth of her family." She took the field, like the meanest among them, to assert the cause of public liberty, and to seek revenge for her body, seamed with ignominious stripes, and her two daughters, injured beyond forgiveness.

"But the avenging gods," urged the Queen, "are now at hand. A Roman legion dared to face the warlike Britons; with their lives they paid for their rashness: those who survive the carnage of that day, lie poorly hid behind their entrenchments, meditating nothing but how to save themselves by an ignominious flight. From the din of preparation, and the shouts of the British army, the Romans even now shrink back with terror;—what will be the case when the assault begins? Look round and view your numbers. Behold the proud display of warlike spirits, and consider the motives for which we draw the avenging sword. On this spot we must either conquer, or die with glory: there is no alternative. Though a woman, my resolution is fixed; the men, if they please, may survive with infamy, and live in bondage."[1]

The army of Suetonius amounted to 10,000 men, while that of Boadicea was said to be 230,000. The Romans consisted of the 14th Legion,[1] the standard-bearers of the 12th, and the vexillarii of the 20th Legion, which was under the command of Agricola: there were various reinforcements from the neighbouring places besides. Pœnius Posthumus, master of the 2nd Legion, called Augusta, had been appointed to lead

[1] Tacitus.

the forward-guard, but refused the orders of his general with contempt, and withdrew from the approaching engagement; after the battle, he was so grieved at having lost his share of the glory, that he slew himself.[1] The great disparity of men between the Roman and British forces, would have deterred Suetonius from hazarding an engagement, had he not been greatly distressed from want of provisions. He, however, relied on the Roman valour, and prior to the onset, addressed his soldiers in terms calculated to animate them to do their utmost. "Despise," he said, "the savage uproar, the yells and shouts of undisciplined barbarians. In that mixed multitude the women outnumber the men. Void of spirit, unprovided with arms, they are not soldiers who come to offer battle; they are dastard runaways, the refuse of your swords, who have often fled before you, and will again betake themselves to flight, when they see the conqueror flaming in the ranks of war. In all engagements it is the valour of a few that turns the fortune of the day. It will be your immortal glory, that with a scanty number you can equal the exploits of a great and powerful army. Keep your ranks, discharge your javelins, rush forward to a close attack; bear down all with your bucklers, and hew a passage with your swords! Pursue the vanquished, and never think of spoil and plunder. Conquer, and victory gives you everything!"[2]

The engagement began. The Roman legion presented a close embodied line: the narrow defile gave them the shelter of a rampart. The Britons advanced with ferocity, and discharged their darts at random. In that instant the Romans rushed forward in the form of a wedge; the auxiliaries followed with equal ardour; the cavalry, at the same time, bore down the enemy,

[1] Girald. Cambrensis, Speed. [2] Tacitus.

and, with their pikes, overpowered all who dared to make a stand. The Britons betook themselves to flight, but their waggons in the rear obstructed their passage. A dreadful slaughter followed: the cattle falling in one promiscuous carnage, added to the heaps of the slain. Tacitus, who gives the foregoing account, concludes by remarking, that "the glory of the day was equal to the most splendid victory of ancient times!"—a confession somewhat humbling to the Roman's pride, one would think, who has just before admitted the greater number of the foe consisted of *women.* Dion Cassius assures us, that the field was not won without difficulty. The cruelty and sanguinary conduct of the Britons on former occasions, were now, if possible, exceeded by the Romans. It is said that not less than 80,000 Britons were left dead on the field, while of the Romans, 400 only were slain, and as many wounded. The surviving Romans interred their vanquished foes, according to their quality, near the place where the battle was fought, known to this day, from the circumstance, as *Battle Bridge.*[1]

[1] The ancient camp, called Ambresbury Banks, near Epping, has by some been considered the scene of the final defeat of Boadicea by Suetonius. "To me," says Gough, "it appears rather to have been a resting-place for the Queen's army after her march from Camalodunum." This spot, which is opposite the park of Copt Hall, and on the south-east side of the London road, was described by Smart Lethieullier, Esq., in a letter to the celebrated antiquary, Mr. Gough. "This entrenchment is now entirely overgrown with old oaks and hornbeams. It was formerly in the very heart of the forest, and no road near it, till the present turnpike-road from London to Epping was made (almost within the memory of man) which now runs within a hundred yards of it; but the entrenchment cannot be thence perceived, by reason of the wood that covers it. It is of an irregular figure, rather longest from east to west, and on a gentle declivity to the south-east. It contains nearly twelve acres, and is surrounded by a ditch and a high bank, much worn down by time; though where there are angles, they are still very bold and high. There are no regular openings like gateways or entrances, only two places where the bank has been cut through, and the ditch filled up very lately, in

The conduct of Pœnius Posthumus, after the successful termination of the engagement, has been mentioned already. The 11th, 13th, and 14th Legions were liberally rewarded for their bravery by Nero.

Boadicea, on beholding the entire overthrow of her army, determined to put an end at once to her life and misfortunes. Her own lofty spirit was unsubdued, but she scorned to become the spectacle of common gaze in a Roman triumph, as she full well remembered was the fate of her brother, the noble Caractacus, nor could she stoop to be the vassal of her conquerors' will. Like Cleopatra, she determined by poison to terminate her existence, consistently preserving to the last the faith she held with her people, whom in her speech she had assured that she would not survive a defeat, to live either in infamy or bonds.

The heroic and unfortunate Queen was interred with honour by her faithful British followers. Some, who think the last decisive battle was fought near Winchester, then a royal city, say that her remains were carried thither in state for interment;[1] but so divided are historians on the subject, that Salisbury Plain has

order to make a straight road from Debden Green to Epping Market. The boundary between the parishes of Waltham and Epping runs exactly through the middle of this entrenchment; whether carried so casually by the first settlers of those boundaries, or on purpose, as it was then a remarkable spot of ground, I leave to better judgments to conjecture. As I can find no reason to attribute this entrenchment either to the Romans, Saxons, or Danes, I cannot help concluding it to have been a British oppidum, and perhaps had some relation to other remains of that people, which are discoverable in our forest. It is distant from Fifield, where the cells and forge were lately discovered, about ten miles; and about eight from Navestoke Common, where we visited the Templum Alatum." *

[1] Hoare (see Notes on Girald. Camb.) says the spot is extremely doubtful; it was certainly south of London, and he thinks somewhere in Surrey.

* Gough's Camden, in Essex, vol. ii., p. 49.

been asserted to be the site of the fierce contest, and Stonehenge itself the spot where the bones of the Queen were laid.

This mysterious monument, the *Cor Gaur* of the Britons, would, indeed, have been fitting for the resting-place of a woman so renowned, whose "great despair" required some emblem which should, for ages after her, excite awe, terror, and amazement in the mind.

Boadicea, during thirty-two years, had enjoyed the rank and dignity of a queen, without either prosperity or happiness accompanying the regal honours. Deserted by her husband for another, her children branded as illegitimate, she had evinced, under every trial, a spirit worthy of her race. On being restored to the position she formerly enjoyed as queen-consort, she employed her influence for the benefit of the people, and kept faith with the Romans till, on her husband's death, they themselves roused, by their conduct, the spirit of "the Lioness," as Gildas calls her, and brought upon them her resentment and revenge. Even long before, her heart must have bled for the bitter trials of her gallant brother Caractacus, whom she had beheld given up, after his honourable defence of her own wrongs, to the insults of his enemies, and led in triumph to Rome. Boadicea the Warlike, displayed, on all occasions, an heroic spirit and incredible valour, worthy of the celebrity she obtained in her own and succeeding times.

Many Britons were taken prisoners in the last fatal battle, but, nevertheless, great numbers had escaped. These would have renewed the contest, but the death of the Queen defeated their purpose, and they were forced to submit to their fate and to disperse.[1] At the close of the battle, the two unfortunate sisters, daughters of

[1] Stowe; Milton.

Boadicea, completely armed, were still fighting on the field. The Romans made them their prisoners, and conducted them to the presence of Suetonius, who, to his honour, expressed to them the greatest indignation at the treatment they had formerly experienced, and promised to make whatever reparation was possible.[1] Nor did he falsify his word. The eldest princess was married, a few months after, by his arrangement, to Marius, the Roman who had wronged her,[2] and whom historians call the brother-in-law of Boadicea, the youngest daughter of the late Queen,[3] who, with her mother's name, inherited her undaunted character and her misfortunes.

Marius was crowned with a golden crown, and appointed to govern part of the conquered country; the district was in the neighbourhood of Kendal, and the prince being called also "Westmer," it derived from him the denomination "Westmereland."[4] It was peaceably ruled by this prince during five years, the whole of which time he maintained amity with his protectors, the Romans, and distinguished himself by prudence, valour, and wisdom. Coel, his son, received a Roman education, and succeeded to the throne in after-years, paying the usual tribute-money to the Emperors: his son Lucius was the first Christian King of the Britons, of whom mention will be made in the history of Gwenissa. Marius died A.D. 78, and was interred at Carlisle.

A fear of the rival claims of Boadicea, the sister of his wife, had induced Marius to banish her from his territories, she being entitled to share the queenly honours of her sister. Her fate was as disastrous as that of her mother, and she had shared every vicissitude of her fortune; and though the wife of Marius withdrew

[1] Holinshed.
[2] Scott, Holinshed.
[3] Hearne's Curious Discourses.
[4] Holinshed.

from the struggle, her spirit was yet unconquered. The subjects of Marius were hers by right of inheritance, and loyally attached to her service and person, as well as to that of her sister. Her cousin, Corbred Gald, King of Scots, had been her associate in infancy; and gratitude for his nurture, entitled her to expect his support and assistance in opposition to the Roman power. Boadicea accordingly assembled a numerous army, composed of Britons, men of Brigantia and of the Isle of Man, resolving to struggle for the vengeance which she still considered incomplete. She put to sea with her forces, and landed in Galloway, the whole of which was at that time in possession of the Romans, and at Epiake they had fixed their head-quarters.

The precise spot where the younger Boadicea landed is not stated; but she is said immediately after to have marched in the dead of night, unknown to the Romans, to the place where her enemies had encamped. Coming thus suddenly on the tents of the unprepared Romans, Boadicea and the Britons slew many of their most valiant leaders with their soldiers, and would have entirely destroyed the whole of their forces, had not Petilius, the Roman general, been alarmed, and prepared great lights or torches of pitch and resin, which being thrown into the faces of Boadicea's troops, enabled him to discover and repulse them. By this means the Romans gained time to put themselves in order and defend their camp until the morning; for being apprehensive of further danger, they did not quit their tents to pursue the flight. When daylight arrived, they made an onset on the Britons and put them to the rout.[1] Next day Boadicea went to Epiake, which she fired, and in it the whole Roman garrison was destroyed.

It was some little time afterwards that Petilius

[1] Holinshed.

pursued and routed the followers of the Princess Boadicea, and made her his prisoner; it occurred in the following manner:—A Roman legion[1] had been deputed to seize her person, and by means of using great expedition, laid an ambush, by which stratagem they contrived to enclose her with a great part of her followers. On being captured a second time, expecting to be put to a barbarous death, she is said to have followed the example of the Queen, her mother, and put a period to her existence. Other writers affirm that she was brought alive into the presence of Petilius, and interrogated by him respecting her enterprise; upon her making a courageous answer, she was slain on the spot by his soldiers: it is not, however, certain that Petilius himself either designed or commanded the death of Boadicea the Younger.[2]

Agricola, on returning to Rome after the defeat and death of Boadicea, was, for his brilliant successes, raised to the patrician rank by Vespasian, and soon after to the government of Aquitaine. Tacitus writes thus of him, during his consulship: "Though I was then very young, he agreed to a marriage between me and his daughter, who certainly might have looked for a prouder connexion." The nuptial ceremony was not performed till the term of his consulship expired. Soon after Agricola was appointed Governor of Britain, with the additional honour of a seat in the pontifical college. He arrived in Britain A.D. 78, and governed during the reigns of Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. Having resolved to subjugate the island, and render it

[1] A legion consisted of six thousand men: a cohort was six hundred—a tenth of a legion, though "chief cohorts" sometimes contained a thousand men.—*Rapin.*

[2] The following year, A.D. 73, Petilius was succeeded by Julius Frontinus, a man of eminence and information, distinguished as a lawyer and soldier, and as much renowned for virtue as talent.

of actual service to Rome, he carried his arms northward, defeating the Britons in nearly every encounter.[1]

Agricola, who had previously subdued all the southern states, after the defeat of Galgacus, fixed a chain of garrisons between the Firths of Clyde and Forth, to secure the Roman province—for such Britain had at last become—from the invasion of the northern barbarians.[2] Another important and glorious act was performed by his orders. The Roman fleet sailed round the northern point, and made the first certain discovery that Britain was an island. The cluster of islands called Orcades, till then wholly unknown, were in this expedition added to the Roman empire; "Thule, which

[1] In a decisive action which took place in Caledonia, in the neighbourhood of the Grampian Hills, the Scots, with their heroic chieftain, Galgacus, were defeated, the loss on the side of the Britons being estimated at 100,000 men.* The speech of the heroic pupil and nephew of Queen Boadicea on this occasion, which is given in the pages of Tacitus, strongly sets forth the oppression of the Romans, their ambitious artifices, and their vices, and affords a noble sample of the genuine outpourings of a heart inspired by the spirit of true liberty. To use the language of the commentator of the historian who records the speech of Galgacus, "the ferocity of a savage, whose bosom glowed with the love of liberty, gives warmth and spirit to the whole speech. Neither the Greek nor the Roman page has anything to compare with it. The critics have admired the speech of Porus to Alexander; but excellent as it is, it shrinks and fades away before the Caledonian orator. Even the speech of Agricola, which follows immediately after it, is tame and feeble when opposed to the ardour, the impetuosity, and the vehemence of the British chief.† After the defeat and death of his sister Boadicea, Corbred, the Scottish King, had retired to his own dominions, where he died in peace, leaving three sons, all minors, Corbred, Talcan, and Brek; of whom the first had been educated by Queen Boadicea, and was surnamed "Gald," or "Galgacus," "the Fighter of Battles."‡ Galgacus was buried at Dunstaffnage, where a sumptuous monumen t was erected to his memory, on which were engraved all his actions, and pillars were placed around his tomb.§

[2] Murphy's Tacitus.

* Sir R. Philipps, Tacitus.
† Murphy's Notes on Tacitus.
‡ Holinshed.
§ Scott.

had been concealed in the gloom of winter, and a depth of eternal snows, was also seen by our navigators."

Pennant believed that the Roman fleet anchored under the rock of Dumbarton Castle on one occasion. A fragment of an old building crowning one of the summits, has been conjectured to be the remains of a Roman pharos, or light-house. Agricola's rampart, and that raised by Lollius Urbicus, terminated in this neighbourhood, and traces of the latter (raised under Antoninus Pius, and popularly known as Graham's Dyke) may be seen not far from Dumbarton.

The Castle of Dumbarton, or Dun Briton, signifies "Town of the Britons." This ancient fortress was originally called Arcluid or Alcluid, "the Place on the Clyde," and was capital first of the Caledonians, and afterwards of a British or Welsh kingdom established in that district. It is fifteen miles from Glasgow. Bede, who wrote in the eighth century, says in his time it was one of the chief British fortresses. It was afterwards taken and held by the Saxons, and recovered again from them by the Picts. At last, in 756, Edbert, the Northumbrian king, forced the garrison to surrender for want of provisions.

GWENISSA THE FAIR.

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Here is a father now
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,
Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,
To appease the sea at highest.—*Sir Walter Scott* (*Old Play*).

Was never king more highly magnifide,
Nor dredd of Romans, than was Arvirage.—*Spencer.*

THERE are few histories which do not present instances of the political influence of woman. The wife, the daughter, the mother, or the friend, has, in innumerable cases, become the arbitress of the destiny of an empire; and frequently has it happened, that her

happiness, sometimes even her life, has been offered up as a sacrifice to her country's welfare. Such was the case with Gwenissa, one of the most interesting queens of Roman Britain.

The circumstances of the divorce of Arviragus from Boadicea have been already recounted, and how he assented to the proposals of Claudius, to receive his daughter Gwenissa in marriage, after having made a formal declaration of his submission to the Roman empire. A deputation was therefore dispatched to Rome, to bring over to this country the royal lady who was to replace the repudiated Queen.

The laurel, the badge of joy and victory, was usually affixed by the Romans to their letters of dispatch after success against the enemy,[1] and was the emblem of the successful termination of the expedition undertaken by Claudius. It was also a custom, in the Roman form of betrothal, for the bridegroom to send to his bride a simple *iron* ring, which did not contain any stone, but was symbolical of the lasting bond of which it was the type. In Britain, as well as Gaul, at this time, these rings were worn on the middle finger.[2] At Rome, the number of rings on a person's hand denoted the high rank of the wearer, and many of these bore engravings of Harpocrates, and of the Egyptian deities. In the reign of Claudius, no gold seal or ring was permitted to bear the portrait of the Emperor, without an act of especial licence; but Vespasian, some time after, issued an edict permitting rings and brooches to bear the imperial image. The simple iron ring was accordingly conveyed to the Roman Princess by the ambassadors of the Emperor.

The beautiful Gwenissa, on her father's side, was

[1] And also placed on the spears and javelins of the soldiers.—*Pliny.*
[2] Pliny.

directly descended from Anthony, the Triumvir, and the gentle and virtuous Octavia, sister of the Emperor Augustus. Antonia the younger, daughter of Octavia, by her marriage with Drusus, brother of Tiberius, had two sons, Germanicus, and Claudius—the father of Gwenissa, whose paternal ancestors were therefore the noblest in Rome. Her maternal relationships are not, however, so easily determined.

Shortly before Claudius had departed for Britain, he married Messalina, the mother of Octavia and Britannicus. By his first union with Plautia Urgulanilla, he had an only son. This lady, to whom he had been married in the reign of Tiberius, was repudiated by her husband with great ignominy, being convicted of infidelity, and other crimes. Claudia, the innocent offspring of her guilt, was condemned, at the age of five months, to be exposed at her mother's door. Subsequently to this, Claudius took Ælia Petina, a lady of high birth, for his wife, her father being of consular dignity. After bearing a daughter to the Emperor, named Antonia, Ælia Petina was divorced, but on very slight grounds. Now, if Gwenissa was the legitimate daughter of Claudius, she must have been the offspring of his first or second marriage; yet is her name unnoticed by Suetonius, who enumerates, in exact succession, the several wives of Claudius, and mentions not only Antonia and Octavia, but even the illegitimate Claudia.[1] It appears more likely that Gwenissa was the daughter of Ælia Petina, than that Claudius should have offered to Arviragus a lady—only his daughter by adoption—in order to procure such a peace as might enable him to appear in Rome without disgrace; which is the opinion some commentators on this subject have adopted.[2]

[1] Grafton calls Gwenissa illegitimate.
[2] Rev. P. Roberts' Notes on British History.

On the site of the modern Hospice de l'Antiquaille, at Lyons, formerly stood the Roman palace of Claudius, who was a native of that city. There, at some period, the Emperor and his family had resided; but at the time of which we are writing, Messalina held her court in Rome. To Gwenissa, who was residing there under the care, it may be presumed, of a dangerous and too celebrated stepmother, the imperial embassy was addressed. The emissaries of Claudius departed from Britain in the autumn, and returned in the following spring, bringing over the young princess in safety.[1] The quaint lines of Harding thus record the arrival of the Roman bride:—

"Thene Claudius sente for dame Gennyce,
His doughter fair, full womanly to see;
She came in haste, as then it might suffyce,
To come oute from so farre lande and countrie,
And in a mede with floures of greate beauté,
Wedded they were; where Claudius then made
A cytee fayre, Cayre Glowe[2] to name it had."

Gwenissa was welcomed with great honours on her arrival, and her reception from her aged father was affectionate in the extreme. The nuptial rite was afterwards performed with much solemnity,[3] as the poet relates—

"In a mede with floures of greate beauté,"

in presence of the whole court of both the British King and Roman Emperor, their generals and the soldiery. So great a concourse must have required a much larger space than the customary dwellings of the Britons, and not inappropriately the royal espousals were celebrated

[1] Geoff. of Monmouth, Brut y Tysilio.

[2] William of Malmesbury ascribes the building of the city of Gloucester to Claudius, the father of Gloui, who, he says, was his son "by a British girl named Gewissa."

[3] Lewis, Harding, Tanner.

under the broad expanse of the blue sky, with the enamelled carpet of green turf, bespangled with the first flowers and fairest promises of spring, spread out beneath the feet of the young and lovely bride.

The pageant at this inauspicious marriage was imposing, and the mind may easily picture the divers characters there assembled: the aged Emperor, his young daughter, the haughty Arviragus, who had made even his new father-in-law tremble by his power and bravery, and whose feelings must have been divided between exultation and remorse; the statesmen, the generals, and legions, contrasting with the rough and uncivilized forms and garb of the native Britons.

Like many other royal nuptials, the semblance of joy supplied the place of its reality. But to the young bride all seemed fair, and she appears to have been quite content with her lot. At her suggestion, Arviragus proposed to his father-in-law the erection of a new city on the scene of their espousals, commemorative of the occasion. Claudius willingly assented, and in person laid the foundation of a city to which he gave his own name, calling it Claudio-cester, now Gloucester. It contained a temple to the Emperor in which, if Tacitus is to be depended on, he received the honours of a deity. The Romans ever worshipped their rulers, in the empire, with extravagance, and the affability and generosity Claudius testified towards the Britons, in which perhaps he was desirous of securing their future goodwill for his daughter, having made a very favourable impression, the Britons perhaps followed their example in this respect without disinclination.

The building of the Roman city proceeded with alacrity, and as soon as it was completed, a Roman military establishment was placed there, by consent of

the Britons; in this arrangement Claudius testified not only his desire to secure his conquests, but to afford a security for the future safety of his daughter. An army of regular legions, and a large body of auxiliaries, had accompanied Claudius into Britain, from which due arrangements were made by selecting the persons most fit to colonize the new Roman station.[1]

As if to leave nothing incomplete, the marriage of Arviragus and Gwenissa was a second time celebrated at Lud's Town, the capital of the Trinobantes, where it was followed by many regal festivities, and the crown was formally placed on the head of the British King and his Roman bride. The crowns of our ancient British sovereigns were mostly made of pure gold, though it appears from some ancient coins, that Cymbeline also wore a fillet of pearls.[2] They were worn on nearly all state occasions, whether in battle, in processions for religious festivities, or on the occasion of meeting in council, not only by the Kings, but the Queens also. We are expressly informed of an untoward accident which occurred to the Queen of Cathir the

[1] "About the middle of February, 1818, some men in the employment of Sir W. Hicks, Baronet, while digging up the roots of an old ash-tree, which they were employed to fell, at Cooper's Hill, about four miles from Gloucester, came to a large stone that excited their curiosity. On removing it, they discovered a flight of steps leading to an apartment, in the centre of which was a cistern about a yard square; in clearing the room, the skulls of a buffalo and a bullock, with horns complete, and the remains of a fireplace with a quantity of wood-ashes, were likewise found. A fortnight afterwards, four more apartments were discovered; in one of which is a very curious tessellated pavement (the tessera are cubes of about half-an-inch), also the remains of several urns and figured tiles of Roman pottery. The walls of one of the apartments, and also the passages, are painted in *fresco*, with alternate stripes of purple, yellow, and scarlet, all of which are beautifully shaded and curiously ornamented with scrolls and a border. These interesting remains of antiquity have probably existed for upwards of seventeen centuries."—*Journal of Science and the Arts*, 1818, No. IX, p. 144.

[2] Selden.

Great, whose golden crown, was *stolen* from her at a grand convention, held at Tara, A.D. 141.[1] Some of these golden crowns were afterwards displayed by Claudius on his triumphal entry into Rome, among other spoils taken from the Britons; they were of beaten gold, and one—a present from Spain to the Emperor—weighed seven pounds, while another, he had received from that part of Gaul called Comata, weighed as much as nine pounds.[2] A British naval crown of gold was, moreover, placed by Claudius close by the civic crown, over the gate of the Imperial Palace at Rome, in token of his victory over the British sea, when he crossed it.[3]

The period of Claudius's visit to Britain is by some said to have been extended to two years, while others say a few months only. As soon as peace was established, and Arviragus settled in the government, as a tributary of Rome, the Emperor bade a final adieu to his son and daughter, and returned to Rome, being everywhere received with the honours of a conquering hero; a triumphal arch was erected at Boulogne, commemorative of his victories over the Britons. He entered Rome in triumph, attended by his captives of war; the Empress Messalina following him at a distance as he proceeded through the city, in a chariot magnificently adorned. On arriving at the capital, Claudius mounted the steps on his knees, supported on each side by his two sons-in-law, Silanus and Pompey.[4] The surname of Britannicus was awarded to the Emperor for his exploits; and he, on his part, directed it should be borne by his son by Messalina.[5] Presents of triumphal ornaments and chains of gold were adjudged to the several officers who had accompanied the expe-

[1] O'Flaherty. [2] Pliny. [3] Echard. [4] Ibid. [5] Ibid.

dit on, as we find on record by inscriptions yet extant,[1] the senate moreover decreed that annual games should be established in honour of this event; and for some time after the return of Claudius, Rome was filled with every kind of festivity, dramatic representation, horse-races, bear-combats, pyrrhic dances, and gladiators.[2] Such were the rejoicings in commemoration of the peaceful conquest of Britain by Claudius, through the agency of his daughter's charms.[3]

That the personal attractions of the daughter of Claudius were of no mean stamp, is evident from her having been surnamed "the Fair." This Queen is only known to us by the name of Gwenissa, and not by the one she had borne in former years in the land of her birth. This is remarkable, but it was a custom with the Romans, and often with the Britons, to change the names of foreigners into their own peculiar dialect; and probably the fair stranger received hers from the Britons on account of her personal beauty, the word Gwen literally signifying, in the dialect of the island,[4] a "lovely" or "fair" woman: the Roman Venusia, or Venus, might have been associated, and the British *Gwenissa,* thus formed, which, if written in Saxon, is sometimes Winifred (the g, v, and w being often interchanged)—a name used by the Britons to designate "Fair Countenance," and by the Saxons a "Winner or Procurer of Peace."[5]

After the first splendours of her marriage were passed, and her father had departed, Gwenissa the Fair might, perhaps, have heaved more than one sigh for the luxurious scenes of her youth. Imperious destiny, however, had fixed in Britain her future home, and so great an ascendancy had the young Queen obtained over the mind of the fascinated Arviragus, that he seemed

[1] Pliny. [2] S. Turner.
[3] Univ. Hist., S. Turner. [4] Josephus. [5] Butler's Lives.

to value her as his chief good, while, by the gentle sway of beauty and goodness, she obtained from all those who surrounded his person, unqualified admiration.[1] The passion, however, which her beauty had illumined, was of transient duration, After a time, the "late remorse" of Arviragus awoke, to remind him that for her and her father's interest he had been compelled to divorce his earlier-chosen, and once not less-beloved Boadicea, and that the mother of his children was suffering for her sake. Perhaps Arviragus, who had steeled himself against the pangs of conscience for a time, became their prey when he was able to perceive the true state of his circumstances, and that his apparently splendid position was simply a condition of slavery. Impatient at his bondage, he at length resolved to assume, in his own person, the grandeur and consequence of a sovereign, and to assert his power over both the Romans and British people, whom he had been appointed by Claudius to rule merely as his deputy. Haughty, arrogant, and overbearing, his conduct displeased the civilized Romans so much, that not choosing to submit to the ostentatious display of wealth and power in a barbarian, they resented his attempt. Arviragus took this as a pretext for breaking off his faith with his allies, the countrymen and friends of his Queen. Information was forwarded to Claudius that Arviragus had declared his independence, on which the Emperor despatched Vespasian to reduce him to obedience. The struggle was again renewed, and the Roman general laid siege to Exeter. Arviragus marched to its relief, and a battle took place, in which much loss was sustained on both sides. At this critical juncture, the character of Gwenissa shines forth in very pleasing light. She had been much afflicted by

[1] Geoff. of Monmouth.

the hostilities which had arisen between her father and her husband, and undertook, in person, the difficult task of arranging an accommodation between the hostile parties. The day after the battle, Gwenissa, in her character of the "Winner of Peace," had an interview first with one party, and then with the other, and through the influence of her beauty and solicitations, succeeded in reconciling them to each other. The result of her successful mediation was, that the Romans and Britons united their rival forces, and proceeded in harmony to London in each other's company, and afterwards Arviragus paid the tribute-money to Vespasian, as formerly agreed upon with the Emperor.[1]

The especial request of Queen Gwenissa detained Vespasian in Britain during the following winter.[2] The unsettled state of the country made her consider the presence of this distinguished leader in some measure necessary to her own safety, and the late defection of her husband might have raised some suspicion of his fidelity to herself in her mind. This, the prolonged stay of Vespasian was calculated to dispel, and welcome, no doubt, must the society of this brave and excellent man have been at the court of Roman Britain. The future Emperor of Rome had fought no less than thirty battles under Claudius and Plautius, had subdued two mighty nations, and twenty towns, with the Isle of Wight, then called Vectis; for his military exploits he was rewarded with triumphal ornaments, the sacerdotal dignity, and consulship; nor was the renown of the young Titus, his son, who served under him in Britain, much inferior to his own, as numberless inscriptions in Germany, and in this country, are yet remaining to attest.[3] While these distinguished guests were staying in Britain, the court

[1] Biog. Brit., Holinshed.
[2] Harding's Chronicle.
[3] Echard.

resided at Lud's Town. It was about this date that Arviragus probably commenced the Castle of Windsor for his royal abode, though it is by some ascribed to a later period.[1]

While Vespasian yet tarried at the court of Arviragus and Gwenissa, an event happened which William of Malmesbury records as a remarkable piece of ecclesiastical antiquity. He states, that when St. Philip the Apostle, after the death of our blessed Lord, was in Gaul, promulgating the doctrines of Christianity, he received information that all those horrid superstitions which he had observed in the inhabitants of that country, and had vainly endeavoured, with the utmost labour and difficulty, to overcome, originated from a little island at no great distance from the continent, named Britain. Thither he immediately resolved to extend the influence of his precepts, and despatched twelve of his companions and followers, appointing Joseph of Arimathea, who, not long before, had taken his Saviour from the cross, to superintend the sacred embassy.[2] On their arrival, Vespasian interested him-

[1] Holinshed.

[2] Norman authorities have assigned to Joseph the credit of being an apostle to Britain, and they are supported by the approving opinion of Cardinal Bona and Geoffrey of Monmouth. His pretensions have been defended by Theophilus Evans in his Drych y prif Oesoed, and the learned Charles Edwards in his Hanes y Ffydd. Leland tells us, that he met with the fragment of Melkinus in the library of Glastonbury; by which he concluded, that Melkinus had written something of the history of Britain, and particularly something concerning the antiquity of Glastonbury, and Joseph of Arimathea. But this story, says Leland, "he sets on foot without any certain author," which makes this learned antiquary dissent from him. And elsewhere, when speaking of the Glastonbury tradition, he observes, "that twelve men are said to have come hither under the conduct of one Joseph; but not Joseph of Arimathea." Bishop Stillingfleet in his Origines Britannicæ (ch. i.) has ably examined all the circumstances connected with this tradition, and has satisfactorily proved the improbability of the mission of Joseph of Arimathea to this country. No mention too is made of it by

self very warmly in their behalf with both the King and Queen, to whom he related a miracle concerning St. Joseph :—

> Vespasyan praied the kyng,
> The quene also, to be to hym good lorde
> And good ladye, which they graunted in all thing.
> * * * *
> All this he told the king and eke the quene,
> And prayde them his supporters to bene.[1]

The royal protection was granted to the strangers, at the request of the Roman general, and they were hospitably entertained by Arviragus,[2] who, to compensate them for their hard and toilsome journey, bestowed on them, for a place of habitation, a small island, which then lay waste and untilled, surrounded by bogs and morasses. To each of the twelve followers of St. Joseph, he appointed there a certain portion of land called a hide, sufficient for one family to live upon, and composing altogether a territory to this day, denominated "The Twelve Hides of Glaston."[3]

This account of the first introduction of Christianity into Britain, singular and romantic as it may seem, is not undeserving of attention, as it is well known that St. Paul preached to the utmost bounds of the west;

Gildas, Bede, Asserius, Marianus Scotus, or any of the earliest writers.—*Chronicles of the Ancient British Church, anterior to the Saxon Era*, p. 16.

[1] Harding.

[2] It is said that Arviragus was converted by St. Joseph, and received the baptismal rite.* St. Joseph also gave him a shield, white as silver, on which was figured a cross—

> Which shelde, by Joseph exhortacion,
> He bore on him in feldes of werre alwaye,
> And in his baners and cote armour gaye.
> *Harding's Chronicle.*

These arms were used throughout Britain, that each man might know his nation by them.

[3] Collinson's Somersetshire; Biog. Brit.

* Nennius.

and we have excellent authority for believing that some of the Apostles actually preached to the Britons. Theodoret,[1] who asserts this, declares the Britons were converts to St. Paul; and states, that Aristobulus, a bishop ordained by St. Paul, and sent to Britain as a missionary, was martyred A.D. 56. There is, indeed, every reason to believe, that the Christian faith was early promulgated in Britain,[2] and many converts made prior to the defeat of Queen Boadicea. If Vespasian was at all instrumental in establishing it here, it is singular enough, as his son Titus was the destroyer of Jerusalem, and disperser of the Jews throughout the world.

Pomponia Græcina, wife of Plautius, a lady of the court of Gwenissa the Fair, is thought to have been a believer in the Christian faith. This Roman matron was accused of having embraced a strange and foreign superstition, for which crime she was condemned to be tried by her husband. According to the custom of the times, Plautius convened her whole family and relations for this purpose, and in their presence tried her for her life and fame; after which, he pronounced her innocent of anything immoral.[3]

Gwenissa the Fair was perhaps not only a patroness

[1] A bishop of the fifth century.

[2] Gildas fixes the event in the eighth year of Nero's reign.

[3] Pomponia Græcina, returning to Rome after the death of her husband, perhaps, in company with the imprisoned Caractacus and his family, became acquainted with Claudia Rufina,* daughter of that British prince, and with her is named in the Epistles of St. Paul, as being "saints of the household of Cæsar." She ever after her trial led a retired life; but though this has caused many writers to esteem her of the Christian faith, it did not deter Ovid from addressing to her the fourth Book of his Metamorphoses. Her friend Claudia, with her husband and family, mingled in the most brilliant circles of Rome, and are numbered among the most eminent early Christians.†

* Gladys Ruffyth, in the British dialect.

† Saxon Martyrology; Archbishop Usher.

of the disciples and missionaries of the new faith, but the mild doctrines they promulgated might have in-

They were friends of the poet Martial, who addressed an Epigram to Aulus Rufus Pudens, on the happy occasion of his marriage to Claudia; and another to the young lady herself, on the same subject, as well as some complimentary verses on her beauty, from which the following is an extract:—

"From painted Britons how was Claudia born!
The fair barbarian how do arts adorn!
When Roman charms a Grecian soul commend,
Athens and Rome may for the dame contend."*

A book of Epigrams and an elegy on the death of her husband are said to have emanated from the genius of this royal lady,† who, when her father Caractacus obtained leave to return to Britain, remained behind at the court of Rome, where she was afterwards united to A. R. Pudens, who was a Roman knight and of senatorial rank, as well as a philosopher of the Bononian sect. Linus, who had been honoured by an Epigram of Martial being addressed to him, is named with Pudens and Claudia, by St. Paul in the second Epistle to Timothy. The apostle visited Rome A.D. 62, eleven years after Claudia went thither with her father. It is even asserted that Timothy, the disciple of Paul, was a son of Claudia by Pudens,‡ and that it was owing to the impression made by his preaching that, A.D. 156,§ King Lucius addressed a letter to Eleutherius, then Pope of Rome, requesting further instructions on the Christian faith.‖ In consequence of this application, SS. Fagan and Dervan were sent over to Britain, who, on their arrival, baptised the King and Queen, with their family; whose example was imitated afterwards by their subjects, the inhabitants of Essex, Sussex, and Surrey;¶ and thus the doctrines of Jesus became established in the island. Many churches were built by Lucius, particularly those of Winchester and Westminster, which last occupied the spot on which now stands the venerable Abbey of St. Peter. In the subsequent persecution under Dioclesian, it was pulled down, and a temple to Apollo erected from its ruins.

Lucius, the first Christian monarch of Europe, was called "Lever Maur," or "the Great Light;" because he assumed for his badge "the Star of Jacob," which may be seen upon his coins; two of which bear the impression of the Cross, with the royal initials, L. U. C.

The glorious example of Lucius and his queen was followed in

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* Liber IV., Epigram 13. † Baleus; Female Worthies.

‡ Rowland's Mona Antiqua.

§ Geof. of M. gives the date of Lucius' *death* as 156. Nennius gives 167 as the date of his *conversion*. Bede 156.

‖ Rowlands. ¶ Weever; Stillingfleet.

fluenced her many acts of generosity and kindness. But the crisis of her destiny, delayed for a time, was at hand. Arviragus, who had increased his power by timely submission, until he had become a terror to the neighbouring kings, at last, elevated with pride, again resolved on asserting his power, and, joining a confederacy of chieftains who had assembled at Shrewsbury, amongst whom was Caractacus,[1] was, as has been related, then reconciled to Boadicea.

The news of the final desertion by Arviragus of his fealty and his love, so deeply affected the unfortunate Gwenissa, whose unmerited affection was thus spurned, that, overcome by the extremity of her grief, the hour of maternal anguish was prematurely brought on, and, in the midst of her sufferings, she expired.[2]

The son to whom Gwenissa gave birth, survived, and received the name of Marius, to which was afterwards added that of "Westmer."[3] With the death of Gwenissa ceases all information regarding the earlier British Queens, no record having been preserved of any until we come to those who were adventitiously so. In resuming the line we have to introduce a Roman-born subject.

Scotland, A.D. 185, when Donald, brother of Ethodius, became king. This prince sent ambassadors to the reigning pontiff, St. Victorinus, requesting him to send over to him some religious men to instruct himself and his subjects in the Christian faith. On their arrival the king, queen, and many of the nobility and people, embraced the faith with great zeal, though idolatry was not extirpated from the country for many years after.*

[1] Geoffrey of Monmouth, Holinshed.
[2] Caxton's Chronicle.

* Scott's Hist. of Scotland.

JULIA "DOMINA."

CONTENTS.

Julia born in Phœnicia—Julia Mæsa, her sister—Beauty and talents of Julia Domina—Her abstruse learning—Her ambitious views—Her arrival at the Imperial City—She is noticed by the Empress—Her success—Her admirers—Severus—The Augury—The Marriage of Julia—Children of Severus—Caracalla and Geta—Eastern Expedition of Severus—Julia becomes Empress—They go to Britain—Advance to Caledonia—Difficulties and Trials on the Campaign—Fulgent lays siege to York—Cruelty of Severus—Superstition of the Emperor—The Court at York—Luxury and pomp—The Emperor's death—Enmity of the Antonines—Return to Rome—Fratricide—Grief of Julia—Severity of Caracalla—Supposed Marriage to her Step-son—His Murder—Julia dies—Her Sister's children—Her character as regards Britain.

THIS celebrated woman was not descended from an illustrious family, her father Bassus being merely a priest of the sun at Emessa, a town of Phœnicia; and Julia Soæmias, her mother, had another daughter also, who is known in history as Julia Mæsa, and who became equally distinguished with her sister.

The eldest daughter, whose fate it was to become elevated to the throne of Severus, the Roman Emperor, was by nature gifted with the most rare beauty, so that she charmed all those who approached her; which impression was rendered permanent by the superior talents which accompanied her personal endowments. The

mind of Julia, however, was little in accordance with her personal qualities, for malice and dissimulation were its characteristics. The study of philosophy, geometry, and the various sciences, from an early age, was her pursuit, though not commonly the taste of her sex; and this afterwards rendered her capable of enjoying the society of learned men, for she could converse freely with them on any subject; and not only did she think correctly, but her address was easy and graceful, and her manner of writing elegant; so that on her elevation she proved herself competent to manage the most delicate affairs of the cabinet.

Julia, to all the shining qualities calculated to give her influence, added ambition. She was inspired with the presentiment, that hers would be a high and brilliant destiny; and her acquaintance with judicial astrology had led to a knowledge of the prediction that her husband "should one day become Emperor!" The path of glory seemed to open before her: full of hope and expectation, she quitted the obscure town to which she owed her birth, for Rome, the theatre of the world, which she judged a worthy sphere for the display of her charms and her genius. Julia Domina was accompanied by her sister, no less eminently endowed in mind and person than herself.

Scarcely was she arrived at the Imperial City, when she attracted the notice, and was taken into the protection of the Empress Anna Faustina. In a city so devoted to magnificence and display, the lovely sisters could scarcely have failed to be admired. Julia, who was truly Syrian in her character, delighted in sports, shows, and every sort of diversion that could gratify the senses. The high spirits in which she appeared at these festivals, set forth her beauty to the most dazzling a vantage, and always ensured some fresh conquests.

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A crowd of lovers was soon at her feet, and among the number, Septimius Severus, then only a Roman tribune. At the time this bright star of foreign lustre appeared in the horizon, with her combination of attractions, Severus, who had lost his first wife, Martia, was revolving in his mind a second marriage. He, like Julia, had certain presages of his future greatness; some augurs, whom he had consulted respecting a wife who would be likely to forward his ambitious views, being acquainted with the prediction concerning Julia, informed him of it, and gravely recommended the lovely Syrian as a suitable match. The superstitious Severus readily conceived they were destined for each other,[1] while her ambition, and the assurance that her husband should arrive at empire, had more influence on his heart than even her beauty. Already the favourite of the Emperor, he had great interest at court, and made so good an appearance, that Julia did not doubt of his being a man whose preferment was certain. She readily accepted his offer, and thus the first grand step towards the accomplishment of the prophecy was fulfilled. The nuptial ceremony was solemnized in the Temple of Venus, near the Imperial Palace; the Empress Faustina not only honouring the espousals with her presence, but resigning her own apartment on the occasion for the use of the newly married pair.

Severus was by birth an African,[2] and had obtained from the Emperor Marcus Aurelius the offices of quæstor, tribune of the people, and prætor; after which he was proconsul of Africa.[3]

At the time of Julia's marriage, he was the father of three children by his first wife, one of whom was the afterwards unworthily celebrated Caracalla. This prince

[1] Spartian. [2] Born A.D. 146, at Leptis or Lepris.—*Crevier.*
[3] Spartian.

was born at Lyons, where his father had formerly been stationed as Governor of Gaul, during the war of the usurpers. His mother, Martia,[1] was a native of Britain,[2] and at the time of her marriage, Severus was a tribune under Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. As Caracalla bore the name of Bassianus, many have esteemed him the son of Julia;[3] but that name, perhaps, was given him as a compliment to her, as, soon after Severus quitted Gaul, and while Bassianus was yet a child, Martia died, and Severus entered into his second marriage: the daughters of the first union were both called Septimia, from Severus himself, who derived it from his father, Septimius Geta.[4] Two years after her marriage, Julia gave birth to a son, at Rome,[5] named Geta, from his grandfather. The fact of the two brothers being the offspring of different mothers,[6] accounts for many minute points in their after-history. The eldest-born was by the woman who derived her origin from a British family, whose history has not, however, reached us, on account of the Roman contempt for a subdued nation; the younger enjoyed from the cradle, every honour and privilege of a Roman citizen by birth and education. Yet was Severus particularly partial to the children of Martia, and after his marriage with Julia, is said to have even erected statues to the memory of his former wife, at the request of his son Bassianus, who could not be pacified in any other way, under the contempt shown for his mother, whose alliance was considered

[1] Martia or Mary; Owen's Pedigrees.

[2] Crevier; Lewis's Hist. of Brit.; Spartian; Owen's Pedigrees; Lives of the Empresses.

[3] Wootton, in the History of Rome, says both Bassianus and Geta were children of Julia, the second wife of Severus, whom he married after the death of Martia, his first consort; but this does not seem to be the case, from a careful examination of the many points in the history of these princes.

[4] Crevier. [5] Lives of Empresses. [6] Echard.

ignoble.[1] This occasioned a preference among the Romans for the son of Julia, which, added to the misfortune of his losing his mother, Martia, at so tender an age, and being committed to the care of a jealous stepmother, were unfavourable circumstances, in themselves sufficient to account for the many bad features displayed in the character of Bassianus "Caracalla"[2] during the latter years of his life. In childhood especially tender-hearted, the earnest entreaty of this young Gaul had obtained from his father, on the reduction of Byzantium, a mitigation of the punishment to which that city and Antioch had been condemned,[3] which tender emotions of affection and sympathy were entirely extinguished before the young prince had arrived at the imperial power.

The causes which led to the expedition of Severus into the East, and taking of the cities of Byzantium and Antioch, being immediately connected with his elevation to the throne of the Cæsars, require to be noticed here. At the time when Julian received the imperial power, the vast armies of Rome were commanded by three several leaders, each possessed of wisdom and experi-

[1] Lewis; Lives of the Empresses.

[2] Both before and after his father's death, Bassianus appeared often in the dress peculiar to the Gauls, from which he derived the name by which he is chiefly known in history—Caracalla. The cassock of this name, which Caracalla rendered fashionable in Rome, was originally Gaulish; it was a long garment reaching down to the ancles,* and resembled the habit of a modern monk, being sometimes worn with, and sometimes without, a hood or cowl.† By some the name of Caracalla, given on this account, is regarded as a reproach thrown on the prince's origin. The love of dress of Caracalla is seen also by his appearing in a dress peculiar to the Alemanni whom he had conquered, and wearing false hair of the same colour as theirs.‡

[3] Crevier.

* Echard.

† Aurelius Victor Tenacius de Re Vestiaria Rom., Hoffman. Lexic. Univ.

‡ Dio Aurelius Victor.

ence, yet differing in character, and each alike in the one point of anxiety to succeed to the throne of Pertinax: they had an equality of force, three legions being at the disposal of each; but the army generally decided, in such cases as theirs, the fortune of the day; and of the three competitors for power—Pescennius Niger in Syria, Clodius Albinus in Britain, and Septimius Severus in Illyricum, the latter was destined to succeed on this occasion. The empire had long been the goal of his ambition, and from the time of his marriage till his elevation to power, Severus is said to have been always guided by the counsels of Julia, to which he was principally indebted for that high reputation with the soldiery which, in the end, induced them to proclaim him Emperor. He lost no time in undertaking an expedition into the east against Niger, whom he succeeded in making his prisoner. Cruelty was a prominent feature in the actions of Severus throughout his career of triumphs; he put his enemy to death, and the same fate was afterwards shared by his wife and children: most of the senators, his adherents, lost their lives, and the remainder were banished. Those cities which had befriended Niger, were also severely punished; of which number were Byzantium and Antioch, in whose behalf Caracalla interfered; while the Empress, who on this, as on every other occasion, had accompanied her husband, interposed in favour of her native city, Emessa, and obtained its pardon from the Emperor.

It would cause too long a digression to relate all the circumstances of the arrival of Severus at imperial power. Suffice it to record, that his entrance into Rome was one of the most triumphant of those times of pomp and exhibition.

The vanity and pride of Julia were fully satisfied with the honours heaped on both her husband and herself.

Crowns of flowers and of laurel were showered upon them as they passed by the shouting citizens: the senators in state attire met them at the gates with greeting; fires, made of perfumed wood, were lighted in every street: on Julia was conferred the title of August, given always to the wives of their Emperors,[1] besides those of Mother of the Republic and of the Armies, and several other complimentary titles, expressly invented for this occasion. She thus saw fulfilled to the letter the prediction of her future grandeur, on which she had relied. Her pride naturally rose with her prosperity; she insisted on the full privileges of her newly acquired dignity, and intoxicated with her position, treated the greatest persons in the empire with haughtiness and contempt.

Severus meantime was anxious to secure the fortunes of his children by Martia. He accordingly gave one daughter to Aëtius, whom he raised to the consular rank, and bestowed the other on Probus, who already was a consul, and who was offered, on this occasion, the government of the city of Rome, which, however, he was politic enough to refuse,[2] and hoping to ingratiate himself with the new Emperor, gave as his reason, that the honour of being his son-in-law was, in his opinion, infinitely greater than that employment.

Severus, desirous to determine who should be his heir, was so anxious, that the subject invaded his rest, and in a dream he learnt that his successor was to be named Antoninus. Regarding this as an infallible prediction, he brought his favourite son Bassianus into the camp, and gave him the name of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, in presence of all the legions.[3] This son actually did reign after him, as history attests;[4] and it is a circum-

[1] Selden's Titles of Honour.
[2] Lives of the Empresses. [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

stance which Spartian remarks as very singular, that Severus should have omitted, when he wrote the history of his own life, any mention of his first wife, this prince's mother, to whose memory the statues were raised at Caracalla's request.

In order to withdraw his sons, and still more, perhaps, his wife, from the pleasures of Rome, to which she was attached beyond all bounds, Severus availed himself of the excuse afforded by an irruption from North Britain into the territories in the south of the island which were under the Roman empire, to undertake an expedition to Britain.[1] He was accompanied by Julia, his two sons, and two Roman legions.[2] On his arrival, he encountered the rebel Britons in an engagement, when some were reduced to submission, and the rest fled into Caledonia, whither they were pursued by the warlike Emperor.[3]

At the time Severus undertook this expedition, he was advanced in years, and so broken with infirmities, that he had to be carried in a litter; yet, impelled by his indomitable spirit, he proceeded through woods and morasses to the farthest parts of Caledonia. He surmounted all the fatigues of the march, and many fierce encounters which took place between the Roman and Pictish forces. Julia was with her husband throughout the whole of this trying campaign.

One of the foes of Severus in Britain was Fulgent, a relative of Martia, mother of Caracalla. In this campaign with the Scots he fought against the Romans with great bravery, having procured some Picts to assist him in the war, and many inhabitants of the islands adjacent to Britain, as well as the Britons themselves. It is said that he laid siege to York, which

[1] Warrington. [2] Geoff. of Monmouth. [3] Ibid.

was relieved by Severus marching to its aid, and in the contest which followed, Fulgent received a mortal wound. That Severus fell has also been asserted, but this is untrue, as he was prevented by age and infirmities from personally engaging in the contest.

During this warfare the armour of the northern Britons and Caledonians consisted of a small shield and a spear; they wore also a sword depending from their naked bodies, which were painted over with the figures of animals.[1] The cruelty of Severus was in this campaign as conspicuous as ever: a speech of his is on record, of which the following quaint lines are a translation:[2] he commands an indiscriminate slaughter of his enemies:—

"Let none escape your bloody rage—
With terror let all die;
Spare not the mother, nor the babe
Which in her womb doth lie."

From this we discover that women mingled with the strife, even women about to become mothers, and who were fiercely sentenced to be slaughtered by the unfeeling Emperor.[3]

On entering York after his success against Fulgent

[1] Guthrie.

[2] It is translated from the Greek by Mr. Leigh, in his "Select and Choice Observations of the Roman Emperors."

[3] Fifty thousand Romans perished in the expedition of Severus into Scotland, though no battle was fought, through ambuscades of the enemy and fatigue in cutting down woods, building bridges, and drying marshy grounds. Julia must have witnessed much during this season. Severus is said to have observed with great accuracy the length of the days and nights of the summer and winter while in Caledonia, which could not have been done without a stay of at least six months. He pursued his course, laying waste by fire and sword, in spite of his gout and all difficulties, till peace was brought about by a concession of the disputed territory, and the Caledonians delivering up their arms. On this occasion it was that Caracalla had sought to murder his father in the sight of the whole Roman and British army. The Emperor, in presence of his soldiers, was in

and the Caledonians, a circumstance occurred confirmatory of the superstitious character of Severus. A Temple of Bellona stood at that time in Eboracum, and in front of it a small column, called the "martial pillar," whence a spear was thrown when war was declared against an enemy.[1] Severus, on entering the city, proceeded towards that spot with the intention of offering a sacrifice, but on his way thither was met by a Moor wearing a cypress garland about his head,—a circumstance considered so unlucky, that the Emperor ordered him to begone out of his sight: when the man, who was of the class of soothsayers, and, being an African, respected by Severus, who was himself of that quarter of the world, saluted him with these words: "Totum fuisti, totum vicisti, jam Deus esto victor,"

the act of concluding a treaty, and the Britons were presenting their arms in token of submission, when Caracalla, who stood behind, suddenly drew his sword, and would have killed his father. Severus, turning at that moment, beheld the sword raised to destroy him: without betraying any surprise, or uttering a single word, he pursued the business in hand, received the arms of the Britons, and signed the treaty. When he had returned to his tent, he sent for his son: and Papinian, captain of the guard, and Castor, his chief chamberlain, being present, reproached Caracalla for his wickedness. Then offering a drawn sword to him, he said, "If your ambition to reign alone prompts you to imbue your hands in the blood of your father, execute your impious purpose rather in this place than in the sight of the whole world and in the presence both of our friends and enemies. If you are not yet abandoned to such a degree as to murder your father with your own hand, order Papinian to commit the parricide: you are emperor, he must obey you!" This speech neither affected Caracalla at the time, nor rendered his conduct more dutiful for the future.

[1] It is supposed that the site of this building was in or near the street called St. Saviour-gate, as in digging the foundation of some houses on the north side of it, many years ago, large quantities of the horns of several kinds of beasts were discovered, and the probability is increased when we consider its vicinity to the Imperial Palace.*

[2] Spartian. Leigh's Choice Observations.

* Allen's Hist. of York.

and offered to conduct him on to the temple. This was thought by the Emperor to foretell his death; and another prognostic was added when he quitted the temple after the sacrifice had been offered, for some of the black beasts appointed to have been slain are said to have followed the Emperor to the palace. All the Romans, and more especially Severus, regarded this last as one of the worst of omens, and a warning of the approach of death.[1]

During the residence of Severus in Britain, with the exception of the period occupied in the Caledonian war, he constantly held his court at York. It was a military colony, governed by both military and municipal laws. The Emperors sat at times in person in the Prætorium, in the chief tribunal, to give laws to the whole empire; and the rescript of Severus and Antonine, *de rei vindicatione*, is dated from this ancient city;[2] York or Eboracum, may therefore be regarded as a miniature picture of Rome, and as possessing a just claim to the titles with which it has been dignified by Alcuin, of Britannia Orbis, Roma altera, Pallatium Curiæ, and Prætorium Cæsaris. In its form it resembled ancient Rome, for in a plan of the city left by Fabius, Rome is represented in the form of a bow, of which the Tiber was the string: and "the Ouse has not inaptly been called the bowstring of York." Both these rivers run directly through the cities which they water, and have

[1] The structure which was called the Prætorian Palace is supposed to have occupied the whole space of ground extending from Christ Church, through all the houses and gardens on the east side of Goodramgate and St. Andrew's Gate, through the Bedern, to Aldwark. The royal baths in all probability occupied a considerable part of this extent,* for the Romans were peculiarly partial to their hot and cold baths.

[2] Universal History.

* Drake; Allen.

contributed to their ancient splendour and ultimate consequence.[1]

The city, in the reign of Severus, was arrived at the height of its grandeur and consequence. "The prodigious concourse of tributary kings, foreign ambassadors, and other persons of distinction, who crowded the court of the sovereigns of the world at this period, when the Roman empire was in the zenith of its power, in addition to the Emperor's own magnificence, his numerous retinue, the noblemen of Rome, or the officers of the army, all which would necessarily attend him, must have exalted Eboracum nearly to the summit of sublunary grandeur."

Julia "Domina," the chosen partner of Severus, the inseparable companion of his progresses east or west, even to the extreme bounds of the north, held within the walls of the Prætorian Palace her own imperial state. With her was her sister Julia Mæsa, who shared her brilliant fortunes, and never quitted her up the latest period of her existence.[2]

For a space of time not less than two years, while the court was held in Britain, the island natives beheld before their eyes a spectacle novel and imposing,—grandeur and luxury, in all their varied forms of dress and equipage. No wonder that the consequence was a final loss of their own simple tastes and unaspiring habits. As early as the time of Agricola, the Roman

[1] Allen.

[2] At a later epoch of our history, this Roman palace became the residence of the Saxon and Danish kings of Northumberland, and then of the earls of the district, until the reign of Edward the Confessor. The palace, when in possession of Tosti, Earl of Northumberland, brother of Editha, Edward's queen, was plundered and burnt by the enraged populace. It fell afterwards into the hands of the crown; but as the English kings did not reside there, the building became neglected. More recently still "the Guildhall," as the palace of Severus had been named in more modern times, was appropriated to the Dukes of York.—*Allen's York.*

fashions were imitated by the Britons, and especially their dress, proud buildings, baths, and elegant banquets.[1] A Roman British female is exhibited in Smith's Costumes, taken from the reverse of a coin of Carausius. She is habited in the *gwn* and *pais*, just like the Welch peasantry of the present time; except that the former, instead of opening before and wrapping over, appears a copy of the Roman tunic. All the Brito-Roman coins and bassi-relievi agree in exhibiting the tunic as worn over the pais, with sleeves, as at the present day in Wales, descending only down to the elbows.

While the Romans in Britain progressed in the vast undertakings assigned to them by Severus, the Emperor himself remained at York, suffering from severe illness, from which he never recovered. Caracalla, who had returned from his expedition against the Caledonians, not content with so near a view of the imperial diadem as was presented by the fast-ebbing current of his parent's existence, endeavoured to hasten his last moments by exciting a mutiny among the Roman troops, whom he caused to proclaim himself Emperor. Severus, hearing of what had passed, caused the principal offenders to be brought into his presence, who prostrated themselves before him, and supplicated forgiveness.

The nobles of Severus wondering how he could govern so vast an empire in his feeble and diseased state, he remarked that "he ruled with his brain, not with his *feet*," alluding to the gout from which he was then suffering. This had long been a trial to the Emperor, for on returning the second time from the East to Rome, he declined the proffered honour of a triumph, because the gout prevented his riding in the state chariot used on such occasions. When in Caledonia, he was carried in a litter.

[1] Milton.

When he felt himself dying, he caused his urn to be brought, and having taken it into his hand, said: "Thou shalt contain him whom the world could not." Some say that Julia and her son Geta were staying in London[1] when Severus died; but that they were present at the last fatal scene, appears from the address that Severus is said to have made to his sons prior to his death: "Agree among yourselves; enrich the soldiers; contemn all others."

This Emperor, who was indebted for his elevation to the legions, entertained a particular regard for the soldiery, and, out of gratitude, had conferred many benefits on them,—among which was an indulgence which injured the discipline of the army. The soldiers had hitherto been required to live in a state of celibacy, but Claudius permitted to them the rights and privileges which attached to the married state.[2] Severus went further, and gave them leave to marry. Before his time the Roman camp had no place of accommodation for women. Might not Severus have acted in this, as in many other instances, from the influence of his Empress, the attendant of his numerous campaigns, and partaker of his cares and dangers?

The Emperor plainly foresaw the contention that would arise between his sons after his death respecting the empire. After addressing them, as before related, he bade them read in Sallust the dying speech of Mycipsa to his children, in which they would find this

[1] The Emperor's infirmities preventing his own progression through the British states, Julia's visit to the south was probably for the purpose of transacting business, and to join the court of Geta, held at London during his father's visit to Caledonia; for the south of Britain was left under his control,—a politic arrangement of Severus, to prevent differences between the brothers. Of Geta, who was an extravagant admirer of horses, we are told an equestrian statue was found near Bath.—*Collinson.*

[2] Murphy's Tacitus. See notes.

expression: "By concord, small possessions increase; by discord, great ones are wasted." After this parental exhortation, he uttered the following words: "I received the Republic everywhere troubled; I leave it at peace *even among the Britons;* bequeathing to my Antonines,[1] old and lame as I am, an empire which will prove firm, if they be good,—but weak, should they turn out evil."[2]

Such were the last moments of Severus, who died in the Imperial Palace at Eboracum, whose walls not long after were destined to witness the dissolution of another Roman Emperor, Constantius Chlorus, a very different character from its present inmate. The remains of the deceased Emperor were buried in a spot about two miles and a half distant from the city,[3] called, from the circumstance, Severs-hill, to the present day. Of the three singular hills, called Severus'-hills, the centre one is the smallest, and is about twenty-seven yards above the level of the surrounding country; the others are about thirty-five yards in height.[4]

A small arch yet exists in Rome to the memory of Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Julia.

Severus had been raised to the empire A.D. 195, and died A.D. 212, after a seventeen years reign, aged 66. During the last two years his sons had shared in his sovereignty, as Antonines. He is said to have been inexorable to his enemies, but kind to his friends, and rough and untractable in his manners, though exact in his distribution of justice. In his time food was provided to the Roman people, even without asking, whenever it was needed, and the soldiers loved him for his excessive liberality, and for permitting them to have their wives

[1] The title accorded the two young Cæsars, his sons.
[2] Spartian.
[3] In the township of Holdgate and parish of Acomb.—*Allen.*
[4] Leigh, Rudulphus, Camden, and Drake.

in their quarters. The greatest pleasure of the Emperor was to do good to all around him, and Galen, the prince of physicians, who lived in his time, and attained the age of seventy, declares that Severus kept constantly by him a great store of treacle, and other expensive remedies, to relieve such as wanted them, by which means he saved the lives of many persons. Of this number was his Greek secretary, Antipater, son of Piso, to whom Galen dedicated his treatise on treacle, and who wrote the history of the reign of his imperial master, Severus. Arria, also a lady of distinction, was saved by this remedy; she was much esteemed by Severus, because she applied herself to the study of philosophy and the reading of Plato. Severus[1] may be ranked among the *literati* of his own era, for he wrote the history of his own life; while Julia, who successfully applied herself to

[1] Coins of Severus and of Julia have been dug up at Aldborough in Yorkshire, and other parts of Britain. A valuable deposit of Roman coins was dug up near Morton in Yorkshire, consisting of a very large quantity of denarii in excellent preservation, chiefly coins of Severus, Julia, Caracalla, and Geta. They were contained in the remains of a brass chest, supposed to have belonged to a Roman legion, and to have been deposited, on some sudden alarm, in the spot which it had quietly occupied afterwards during a period of almost sixteen centuries.*

A thick coin in middle brass, of Julia, is said to have borne on the obverse a fine head of the Empress, with the legend, "Julia Domna Pia Felix Augusta." The reverse exhibited a full-length figure of Venus; the legend merely, "Felicitas Publica," with the usual S. C. (meaning by order of the Senate) inscribed on the field.†

A considerable quantity of clay moulds, or matrices, for the coining of Roman money, were turned up some time since at Lingwell Yatt, near Wakefield. Several crucibles for melting the metal were also found at the same time, and in some of the moulds there were coins yet remaining. A number of clay moulds for casting coins were also discovered in the parish of Eddington, Somersetshire, having the impressions of Severus and Caracalla, with their Empresses, Julia and Plautilla. Some of these moulds are lodged in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.‡

* Allen's York. † Journal of Science. ‡ Collinson.

letters and philosophy, patronized every art, and was the friend of every man of genius; amongst other proofs of this, it was at her request that Philostratus undertook his life of Apollonius Tyanæus.

According to Gibbon, the nurse and preceptor of Caracalla were both Christians. Origen, also, who died in 253, says in his 6th Homily, "The power of our Saviour's kingdom reached as far as Britain, which seemed to lie in another division of the world." Yet Severus is himself said to have been a persecutor of the Christians. It was agreed by the two brothers, Caracalla and Geta, that they should return to Rome[1] with the Empress-Mother. They set out, bearing with them the ashes of Severus in a golden urn, the same which had been brought to the dying Emperor. On their way so many contentions arose from mutual jealousy, that it was feared they would destroy one another; and on one occasion Geta would have fallen a sacrifice to the poison prepared for him by Caracalla, but for the fidelity of his servants.[2] Julia, as though she had been mother to both, endeavoured by every possible means to reconcile them, but without success; their animosity increased to such a degree that they even ate and lodged separately, and each stood upon his guard against the other. On their arrival in Rome, they immediately divided the imperial palace between them, as they could not agree to live together. "No communication was allowed

[1] According to some authorities, Caracalla, on his father's death, proceeded direct to London, where the Empress and Geta were staying, with the hope of prosecuting his claims on the empire in that quarter; for it too soon became apparent that only one of the brothers could reign, and that the other must fall. The Romans would have preferred Geta for their Emperor, for he was, both by his father and mother, a Roman; but the Britons rejected him, desiring Bassianus "Caracalla," their own countryman by the mother's side, to be advanced to the supreme dignity.

[2] Wootton.

between their apartments, the doors and passages were diligently fortified, and guards posted and relieved with the same strictness as in a besieged place." The two Emperors, one of whom was but twenty-three, and the other a year younger, met only in public, and then in the presence of their afflicted mother.

Every posthumous honour was awarded to the memory of Severus, and on the arrival of the brothers at Rome the first act of Caracalla and Geta was to perform the Emperor's Apotheosis or Deification, with the usual ceremonies. The whole city assumed the garb of mourning. Next, an image was made of wax, to represent exactly the deceased Emperor. This was laid on a stately ivory bed, magnificently adorned with cloth of gold, and placed at the entrance of the palace. On the left hand were seated the whole body of the senators in black, on the right the ladies of the highest quality in plain white habits, without jewels or other ornaments. This lasted for seven days, during which time the physicians resorted to the image as though it had been a real patient, still signifying that they had less and less hopes of the Emperor's life; at which words the mourners always gave a groan. At last, when they had declared his death, the noblest and youngest of the senators carried the bed upon their shoulders through the Via Sacra to the Old Forum, on each side of which were erected two large scaffolds, one filled with young boys, and the other with young maidens, all children of the highest quality, who sang solemn and mournful hymns and songs in honour of the dead. After these were ended, the senators and knights again took up the bed and carried it out of the city into the Campus Martius, where a beautiful pyramid of wood, with several stones, had been erected. The first story was square, being a sort of chamber filled with various sorts

of combustible matter, and richly adorned on the outside with cloth of gold, ivory statues, and fine pictures; the second of a similar character, but smaller size, had the four sides open; the third was still less; after which was a fourth, and, indeed, many other successive stories, each decreasing in proportion, till the last ended in a point. The bed and statue were placed in the second story, in presence of noblemen and gentry of every nation, who desired to do honour to the deceased. Then the Roman knights rode on horseback round the pile in a certain order, to the sound of warlike instruments; afterwards persons in chariots, in purple robes, who represented the most celebrated Roman commanders and emperors; after this Caracalla and Geta, the successors of Severus, fired the pile with torches, and consuls, senators, and knights followed their example. It was wrapped instantly in flames, and from the top an eagle was let fly, which was out of sight in an instant, amid the shouts of the spectators, who, believing the bird carried the Emperor's soul to heaven, from that time forward, paid him the same homage they rendered to their immortal gods.

The disunion which existed between the brothers did not diminish, and they continually had recourse to the Empress, who officiated as mediatrix. A negotiation was set on foot respecting a division of the empire, but this plan, first proposed by Geta, was broken by Julia, who desired to keep her sons together, and foresaw the step would lead to the ruin of the state. On this occasion she threw herself at their feet, begging that they would divide her too between them. She had omitted no opportunity before of reconciling her sons, and now by her prayers and tears established an appearance at least of concord between them. Accordingly, medals were stamped with the images of the two brothers join-

ing hands, and surrounded by the motto "Happy Concord."

Caracalla, who ever listened with respect and apparent deference to the arguments of the Empress, agreed to abide by her decision, and had arranged to meet his long-divided brother in her apartments, for the purpose of a lasting reconciliation. The heart of Julia beat with joy at the prospect of witnessing so tender a reunion, and the meeting so earnestly desired actually took place in her presence; it was then that, in the midst of a conversation which had commenced among the reunited members of the divided family, some centurions who had been concealed in the apartment, rushed suddenly with drawn swords upon the young and helpless Geta. Vainly did Julia cast her maternal arms around her child to shield him from death. In the dreadful struggle she received a wound in the hand from his assassins, and beheld on one side the horrid spectacle of Caracalla animating and assisting the murderers, upon the other, Geta falling dead at her feet, her own person being covered with his blood.

The fratricide flew to the Prætorian camp, where he fell prostrate before the statues of the tutelary deities of the camps. Supported by the army he next hurried to the Senate, and prevailed on that obsequious assembly to declare in his favour. His brother's funeral over, Caracalla returned to the palace, where he found the Empress Mother surrounded by her women, bewailing in the most moving manner the death of her son. His first impulse was to put them all to death, but passion yielded to pity, and he showed great kindness to Julia, to whom he even ordered that the same honours should be paid as were rendered to himself. The heart-breaking scene might have moved one even more stern than that stony-breasted Emperor, and

indeed, what were all the world's honours to Julia at that moment—a widowed wife, deploring the loss of an only and dearly-beloved son! But the silent reproach of those who surrounded the Empress, revived the fury of the murderer, and he commanded them to disperse, on pain of death; while, to prove that he was in earnest, he ordered that one of the terrified mourners should be led away to instant execution. Fadilla, the unfortunate victim of his anger, was daughter of Marius Aurelius, and sister of Commodus, both Emperors; she herself had rendered state-services, by pleading the cause of the people, and preserving the life of a Roman emperor, besides having quelled an insurrection. All this was overlooked by Caracalla, who only beheld the tears shed in the first moment of grief for the death of the young and blooming Geta—a tribute due to the bereaved Empress. This severity had the effect expected, and silenced all remonstrances from the women. Fadilla, the personal friend and confidante of Julia, was the first of a series of victims, termed "the friends of Geta." It is said that no less than 2000 persons of both sexes suffered on this occasion, amongst whom was Papinian, the most eminent lawyer in Rome, the particular friend both of Severus and Julia; his crime was having declined composing a defence for the Emperor, for he observed "it is easier to commit fratricide than to justify it!" Rome was filled with mourning, and the loss of Severus was regarded as a public calamity. Even before he quitted Britain, the sanguinary Caracalla had ordered the death of his wife Plautina. For the sake of the city, for the sake even of Caracalla himself, Julia suppressed her own sufferings; she saw the necessity of resuming her influence over the government, which Caracalla allowed, and during the whole of

his reign, she administered the chief affairs of the State, "with a justice that supported his authority, and with a moderation that sometimes corrected his wild extravagances." On one occasion she remarked to the Emperor how much he exhausted the people by his rapacity; that they were no longer able to pay their accustomed taxes: Caracalla's reply was characteristic of himself, "I shall have whatever money I want as long as I can command a sword."

Advanced in life, Julia still possessed the attractions of beauty, a lively imagination, a firmness of mind, and strength of judgment seldom bestowed on her sex. Spartian, and some other authors, have related that Julia consented to become the wife of Caracalla, and that their nuptials were publicly celebrated, which, if true, would have allied her to the murderer of her only son; but others consider Caracalla to have been only her step-son, which is under every point of her history apparent.[1] The tale seems to have originated in a scandal of the Alexandrians, who called her Jocasta because she lived at court after the death of Geta. Dion plainly intimates that she durst not do otherwise, since any concern for the son she had lost might have cost her her life; and he relates that she secretly mourned over the extravagances of Caracalla, passing the greater portion of her time, during the latter years of her life, in the society of learned men. She would hardly have acted thus, if guilty of such a crime. Julia did indeed accompany the Emperor to the East, but they were not residing at the same spot when he was murdered.

Maternianus[2] wrote to Caracalla, then at Edessa,

[1] Had this scandal of Julia, however, been true, both Herodian and Dion Cassius were ready enough to admit anything against Caracalla, and they do not even mention it.

[2] Captain of the Guards at Rome.

informing him that he had heard Macrinus repeat a prediction that himself was to arrive at the imperial power. Julia was at that time staying at Antioch, and the Emperor, who was at Edessa, had given her instructions in his absence to read all his dispatches. Fully empowered to do so, when the letter of Maternianus fell into Julia's hands, she read it, and transmitted it to Caracalla; but before it reached him, Macrinus, who attended him there, had received private information of the circumstance direct from Rome.[1] Caracalla was driving a chariot at the public shows, when a packet was handed to him containing the letter of Maternianus, and passing them to Macrinus to read, the future Emperor found it amongst the rest.

The particulars of Caracalla's murder need not be dwelt on here; the assassin had been hired by some military conspirators, and at the end of three days, Macrinus received from the army the predicted dignity of Emperor. By his orders, Caracalla's body was burnt, and the ashes conveyed to Antioch to Julia, who was overwhelmed with her new affliction. Some say she mourned but the loss of that power which she so much loved, and to which she had sacrificed her feelings. She had, to this advanced age, retained the title of Augusta, and a great part of the business of the government passed through her hands: Macrinus gave her to understand that she was to retain the dignity of Augusta, with its rank, and to have the honour of continuing guards for her person. On this she resolved no longer to devote her thoughts to death, but to continue to live according to her former dignity. Macrinus soon, however, discovered a cabal with the soldiers, in which she was engaged; so that he hastily ordered her to withdraw from Antioch. This sudden change decided her

[1] By a courier from Ulpius Julianus, his particular friend.

as to what course she would adopt, and abstaining from food, she died, it is said, either of inanition or poison, unable to live as a subject,[1] after a life passed in the enjoyment of supreme power. This event took place A.D. 217, fifteen years after the death of Severus.

The vicissitudes of the life of Julia did not, till the last, affect her spirit or disarm her fortitude. A gifted woman, elevated from a humble station to the highest pinnacle of earthly splendour, her happiness is problematical. The dreadful death of her only son, and the extravagant follies of Caracalla, must have corroded at her heart, amidst all the stately honours and dignity she so much coveted. During the latter period of her existence, her chief enjoyment was that fertile one afforded by the society of the learned, whom to the very last she fostered and protected. If her youth was charged with folly, the qualities she displayed during her after-life may atone for her errors, looking upon her as a public character. She was always disposed to intercede with Severus, and avert his severity, and from her Caracalla received wise counsels. Literature and science followed her footsteps, or sprung up afresh from the decline into which they had fallen. To her, perhaps, were the children of her sister Julia Mæsa, who was with her when she died, indebted for the advice which led them on to their future greatness.[2]

[1] Echard.

[2] Julia Mæsa, after the death of the Empress, her sister, was ordered to quit the country. During the twenty years she had spent at the imperial court, she had acquired an immense fortune, and contracted splendid alliances. She retired to her native city, Emessa, taking her wealth with her, and accompanied by her two daughters and their sons,—for each was a widow, and had an only child. Bassianus, a son of one of these daughters, became priest of the sun at Emessa; and the troops perceiving his strong resemblance to their favourite Caracalla, and, moreover, bribed by his mother, at the instigation of Julia Mæsa, declared him Emperor. Perhaps the

The failings of Julia have been severely visited by historians. Such failings in exalted persons may remind us of the imperfection of all here below. Had Julia's career been less brilliant, less exposed to temptation, she had perhaps exhibited fewer of those imperfections, which the higher the object is placed, become the more manifest.

In her character as a British sovereign, her acts appear to advantage, as she certainly helped to refine the manners of the rude people amongst whom she sojourned.

anticipation of Julia Domina's connivance at some such enterprising scheme had caused the severity shown to her by Macrinus. Bassianus, afterwards well known as Heliogabalus, proved so unworthy, that the army soon repented of their choice, and, attracted by the virtues of his cousin Alexander, son of the other daughter of Julia Mæsa, they raised him to the imperial power; in which capacity, after the murder of Heliogabalus, being guided by his mother's excellent counsels, he displayed during thirteen years remarkable wisdom and prudence. His death took place A.D. 235.

VICTORIA, VITURGIA, AND HUNILA,

Empresses of the West.

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Zenobia and Victoria—Influence of both—Character of Victorinus —His Murder, and that of his Son—Marius chosen by the Empress—His history and fate—Posthumus succeeds—Ælianus—Tetricus appointed by Victoria—Constantius Chlorus in Britain—Victoria's sudden death by the treachery of Tetricus—Aurelian's Roman triumph—Viturgia and Proculus—Bonosus the Pedagogue —His rise—Aurelian bestows Hunila upon him—He proclaims himself Emperor of Britain, Gaul, and Spain—His death—Probus settles a pension on Hunila.

The vast Empire of Rome, at the period of the accession of the Emperor Aurelian, A.D. 270, was divided between two rivals in talent, in fame, and at the last, in misfortune,—Zenobia, Empress of the Eastern division of the Roman territory, and Victoria, the not less deservedly celebrated Empress of the West.[1] It is not without pleasure, that in so distant a period we hail the name which our present beloved Sovereign has engraven on each true British heart,—a name destined to be illustrious; for the Empress Queen of Gaul,

[1] Gibbon.

Spain and Britain, occupied a position among the most distinguished of her times, and by her character and actions illuminated the darkness of the Western hemisphere. "Aurelia Victoria Augusta" possessed such vast power, that she raised as many as six candidates to the imperial dignity, in defiance of the Roman arms, while to the last fatal scene of her existence she maintained the supreme authority over those she had exalted, and over the people whom she had appointed them to rule.

The "Heroine of the West," as Victoria has been designated, was not of British birth, though Britain was included under the dominions over which she held control; she was a native of Gaul, and by her adroitness succeeded in persuading[1] Posthumus, on his elevation to the empire, to receive her son, Marcus Victorinus, for his colleague in power. The assumption of the purple by Posthumus is placed in the year 265, when he was proclaimed throughout Gaul, Spain, and Britain; so highly was he esteemed by Valerian, that when appointed to the government of Gaul, that Emperor wrote to the people in these terms of commendation: "He is one whom I esteem above the rest, and think the most worthy of all to represent the Prince." Among the list of thirty tyrants who aspired to the imperial power during the reigns of Gallien and Probus, we accordingly find those of Victoria, Victorinus, and Posthumus.

The enterprising Victoria was little inferior in merit to her celebrated contemporary, Zenobia; she possessed great courage and ambition, and no sooner had she accomplished her project of securing the empire for her son, than her superior qualities began to unfold

[1] Gibbon.

themselves. It was Victoria who really governed the state, though business was transacted in the name of her son and his colleague; so extraordinary a power had she over the minds of the soldiery, that she could rely on their executing her every wish. Trebellius Pollio, in his account of the "Usurpers," has introduced Victoria to cast contempt on Gallien, by a contrast between himself and the boldness of the women of his time. Victorinus was generally governed by his mother's politic counsels, who, for her valour and masculine courage, was styled "Mother of Armies." By her assistance he opposed Lollianus, whom he defeated and slew in a sharp battle, remaining sole master of Gaul, together with his mother, who was associated with him under the title of Augusta.[1] The influence exercised by the Empress in this situation is compared, by a modern writer,[2] to that possessed by Mammæa in an earlier period of the Roman history, and considered to have been "at least as constitutional."

Cologne was the seat of the Imperial Government of the West, and Victoria, who resided in that city, exercised, in her son's name, all the functions of royalty, while he devoted himself to a life of pleasure, although he is said to have been by nature endowed with every quality requisite to form a hero; and to have equalled Trajan in bravery, Antoninus in clemency, Nerva in gravity, Vespasian in managing the public money, and Pertinax and Severus in his care of the military discipline. The author,[3] who considered "no one ought to be preferred to Victorinus," somewhat contradicts his commendation, when he adds, that his besetting vices "drowned all his good qualities, and cast such a blemish upon his reputation, that no one dares to record

[1] Echard. [2] Sir F. Palgrave. [3] Julius Alexianus,

the virtues of a man whom all own to have deserved the doom which, in the end, overtook him."[1] This doom could not be averted by all the virtues of his mother.

On his first elevation to power, Victorinus had controlled his evil passions; but afterwards, imagining his high rank raised him above control, disregarding fear or censure, he threw off the restraint, and lost the affections of his soldiers by his immoral conduct towards their wives.[2] The plot formed in consequence against the life of Victorinus succeeded so suddenly, as scarcely to leave him time to name his son Victorinus Augustus as his successor. This step, in the event of any emergency, had been advised by Victoria, who appears to have foreseen the fate of her son. The heavy wound her mother's heart received in his loss, did not deprive her of her presence of mind. She instantly caused her grandson to be proclaimed Emperor, and assumed an unlimited power in his name. The honours thus secured proved, however, fatal to the child; for the murderers of his father, in fear of their personal safety under the dominion of Victoria, succeeded in effecting the death of the young Emperor almost immediately after.

Victoria's mind did not, however, sink under this double misfortune; from henceforward she resolved to preserve that throne, which, during five years, she had maintained in her son's name. She determined to govern over the whole empire, by electing some general who should entirely depend on herself. Marius appeared to her well fitted for this purpose, and accordingly she proposed him to the legions, and so well employed her powers of persuasion in his behalf, that she obtained his election as Emperor.[3]

[1] Univ. Hist. [2] Lives of the Empresses. [3] Ibid.

Marius was by trade an armourer, which cast some ridicule on his election; but he was possessed of "intrepid courage, matchless strength, and blunt honesty."[1] In conformity with the terms on which Victoria had assisted in his elevation, she was suffered to enjoy the solid power, while the honours of the government rested on him. At the time he received the purple, notwithstanding his mean origin, he had, after passing through every inferior degree, arrived at the dignity of a general; yet so hurt was he one day at an allusion to his former condition made by one who had worked under him in his shop, to learn the trade, and who came to congratulate him when Emperor, that he received him with the greatest contempt. This unexpected conduct so provoked the man, that he killed Marius on the spot, exclaiming as he stabbed him: "This very sword you made yourself."[2]

Posthumus, the colleague of Victorinus, succeeded, and reigned for seven years.

In the year 266 a new opponent for the empire arose at Mentz, in the person of Ælianus,[3] but he was defeated by Posthumus,[4] who, however, so displeased the soldiers, by not yielding up the city to be plundered, that they put him and his son, the younger Posthumus, to death; when Ælianus assumed the imperial diadem, and was proclaimed in that part of Gaul bordering the Rhine, while the rest was that which had been governed by Victorinus.[5] That Desidianus Ælianus had

[1] Gibbon. [2] Lives of the Empresses.

[3] "Lollianus and Ælianus are supposed to be the same."—*Gibbon.*

[4] Some coins of Posthumus were found in a Roman vase, which contained others of the Emperor Valerian, and was dug up by some workmen in a field at Charlton, in Cheshire, where they had been buried three feet below the surface.—*Journal of Science and the Arts.*

[5] Univ. Hist.

governed the Roman troops in the north of England, during the reigns of Valerian and Gallian, appears by an inscription found in Northumberland.

Trebellius Pollio writes concerning Victoria, that after she had beheld her son and grandson slain by the soldiers, and the others in succession cut off, she stirred up Tetricus, a man of a noble family, and chief ruler of Aquitaine, to seize the rule; and by largely bribing the legions, Victoria at length caused him to be proclaimed Emperor, together with his son Cæsar, throughout Gaul, and he was soon after acknowledged in Spain and Britain.

Tetricus, who was related to the Empress-Queen Victoria, was, at the time of his elevation, commanding a part of Gaul; and as soon as Victoria had procured his nomination, she sent an express to inform him of his new dignity, exhorting him not to refuse an honour conferred upon him by the army. He received the imperial robe at Bordeaux, and shortly after showed himself worthy of his election and the Queen's patronage, by the courage and judgment he displayed during the war in Spain. In his absence in that country, Victoria held the entire government of Gaul, and conducted every affair of the state, according to the arrangement she had made with Tetricus. Placing herself at the head of her army, she maintained her authority independent of the Roman arms; for after successfully making head against Gallien, after placing in succession her son, grandson, and Marius on the throne, she had raised Tetricus to the empire, in spite of the power of Claudius. Coins of brass, gold, and silver, were coined in her name, and bore her impression, specimens of which were still to be seen at Treves, in the time of Pollio. Even during the reign of Aurelian, she opposed the

imperial arms with an undaunted spirit. At that time Tetricus was in Britain, and Aurelian despatched Constantius Chlorus to that country to oppose him.[1] It is not certain whether Victoria herself was ever in this island, but a city in Scotland bears the name of the heroine. So great was the renown of this Queen, that it had not only filled all Gaul, but had spread to the limits of the Eastern Roman Empire. Zenobia, the competitor of Aurelian, heard with pleasure of the grandeur of the "Heroine of the West," and is said to have desired nothing so much as to join her forces to those of the Amazonian Queen, that they might together conquer the whole world![2]

Tetricus had at first yielded to the desire of Victoria, to enjoy the supreme authority; but as soon as he was securely fixed in power, he resolved to shake off the sway of a woman. Victoria, deeply wounded at his ingratitude, would have revenged herself; but Tetricus, aware of her intention, put a period to her existence, within a few months after he had received from her the gift of an empire. Thus, in the very height of her power and success, this remarkable woman, distinguished for her powers of mind and masculine judgment, was cut off by means of the very agent which she had herself created, in hopes of securing the continuance of her sway.

It is thought that the traitor Emperor had expected by this means to ingratiate himself with Aurelian, at whose feet he shortly after threw himself, to be dealt with according to his pleasure.[3] At this critical juncture, when Victoria was no more, and Tetricus in his

[1] Morant's Colchester. [2] Lives of the Empresses.
[3] The reign of Tetricus lasted altogether for six years.

power, the Gallic army was attacked by the forces of Aurelian, when, fighting without a leader and without order, it was easily cut to pieces. By this decisive victory, near Châlons upon the Marne, the Emperor Aurelian obtained the dominion of Gaul, Spain, and Britain. The year 274 witnessed his triumphal entry into Rome, which was conducted in the most superb manner, and graced by the presence of Zenobia and Tetricus. The captives of the several conquered nations, on this memorable occasion, followed the triumphal chariot with their hands tied behind them. The Eastern Queen was so loaded with jewels, that she could scarce support their weight, but was compelled to stop from time to time to take breath: some Egyptians of rank, taken at the defeat of Firmus, and the principal lords of Palmyra, did honour to this ceremony. Amongst the rest were seen Tetricus; his son accompanied him: both were attired in the Gallic costume,—trowsers, a saffron tunic, and a purple mantle, "one of the earliest instances of French fashions," remarks Lady Morgan, "recorded in the pages of history."

The Romans were surprised that Aurelian should cause a woman, and a Roman senator, who had been Consul, to mix in the procession with the Goths, Vandals, and other barbarians; but the Emperor justified his conduct on this point to the Senate, and ever after treated Tetricus with the greatest kindness, to repair the affront put upon him, calling him at times his "colleague," and at others honouring him with the empty title of "Emperor."

Victoria was more happy than either Zenobia or Tetricus, in having escaped by death[2] the indignity of appearing in this humiliating scene. She left her fame

[1] Some say that the Queen died a natural death.

untarnished by disgrace, to descend with the memory of her virtues to succeeding ages.

The renown of Victoria inspired the women of her times with high projects and haughty daring. Through the suggestions of Viturgia, wife of Proculus, that robber chieftain afterwards assumed the imperial power at Cologne.[1] Viturgia was seconded in her ambitious project by Sampso, a woman of as much spirit and daring as she herself possessed, endowed with a manly courage. Proculus had first armed two thousand slaves on his own behalf; after which he entered the army, became Tribune, and had the command of several legions, which instigated him to attempt the purple. Further stimulated by his wife, and supported by the people of Cologne, he caused himself to be proclaimed Emperor in that city, and was afterwards acknowledged throughout the western division of the Roman Empire, including Britain. Proculus was, however, defeated by Probus, and taking refuge with the Franks, from whom he pretended to derive his origin, was delivered up to the Emperor, and punished as he merited.

The famous Bonosus, the colleague in power of Proculus, was of Spanish descent, but his parents were of British birth,[2] and his father taught the rudiments of the Latin language, then the vehicle of all learning, in a public school. Bonosus had entered the army very young, and from a soldier worked his way up through the successive intervening degrees, till he became a general under Aurelian. The Emperor, who had made him Governor of Rhætia, gave him for his wife a princess of the blood-royal of the Goths, whom he had made his prisoner during his twenty years' war against that

[1] Univ. Hist. Gibbon.

[2] Some say his mother was of Gallic origin.

people. Hunila, and nine other Gothic women, in the habit of the other sex, had fought in an engagement between Aurelian and Cannabaud, a Gothic prince. After the battle, in which Cannabaud was slain,[1] some of these females were found dead on the battle-field, and others taken prisoners by the Romans. The latter, among whom was Hunila, were entertained by Aurelian in a manner suitable to their sex and dignity. When peace was made with the Goths, Aurelian exacted some of the sons and daughters of their chiefs as hostages, that the youths might be trained up near his own person, and the damsels be educated in the Roman fashion. Hunila, and the other noble Gothic women, were given afterwards in marriage to his principal officers, in the hope that the two nations might be cemented by these close and endearing connections.[2]

Hunila was distinguished beyond her companions for beauty, wit, and virtue; and in giving her to Bonosus, the Emperor calculated, through her means, on becoming acquainted with the great men among the Goths, who he hoped would, in feasting and drinking with Bonosus, discover to him their secret views and designs.[3]

Bonosus, however, having through neglect caused the Roman fleet on the Rhine to be burnt by the Germans, was so afraid of being punished, that he assumed the sovereignty, and caused himself to be proclaimed Emperor by the troops under his command,—a position in which he maintained himself longer than was expected, his sway extending over Gaul, Spain, and

[1] The chariot drawn by four stags, which Aurelian took from this Gothic prince, was used by him afterwards in his triumphal entry into Rome.

[2] Gibbon. [3] Univ. Hist.

Britain. The last a country which has been named "an isle fertile in usurpers."[1]

Bonosus had, however, like Victorinus, a vice which counterbalanced his good qualities, that of inebriety. He was a slave to Bacchus, and is said to have been able to drink as much as ten men, without being in the least disordered;[2] this was the cause of his downfall. After fighting several battles with Probus, the emperor who succeeded Aurelian, he was finally defeated in a sharp engagement, when he died by his own hand, to avoid falling into the hands of the conqueror.[3] When Bonosus hanged himself, his well-known failing caused the jest to be passed upon him, that "there hung a bottle, not a man."

Probus destroying the rebellious Gauls, however, not only spared the life of Hunila, on account of her virtue and beauty, but settled an annual pension upon her, and suffered the sons she had borne to Bonosus to enjoy their patrimonial estate.[4]

[1] Nearly all the Thirty Tyrants were, like Bonosus, persons of mean birth, who had become exalted through their merit, being considered as models of virtue and ability, and raised at first by the Imperial notice, had afterwards assumed the purple; the term Tyrant then signifying not an abuser of power, but simply an usurper.*

[2] Echard, Univ. Hist. [3] Ibid.

[4] Probus was the first Emperor who permitted Gaul, Spain, and Britain to plant vineyards and to make wine. At the first coming of the Romans, the Britons were unacquainted with the vine, but a licence being granted by Probus for its cultivation, it soon became a very common produce. An early account of London informs us that in the metropolis itself, we had one vineyard in East Smithfield, another in Hatton Garden (which is at this time called Vine-street), and a third in St. Giles's in the Fields. The various other Vine-streets in Bloomsbury, Westminster, Lambeth, and the Borough, have had a similar origin.

The Irish corna, or horn, was not devoted by our ancestors to martial purposes alone, but used to quaff their mead, a custom with the Danish hunters even in the present day.† The ancient Scots,

* Gibbon. † Walker.

as well as the present Highlanders, drank in shells; hence, in the old poetry, we often meet with the expression the "chief of shells," and the "halls of shells," while to "rejoice in the shell," meant to feast sumptuously and drink freely.

The poems of Ossian describe Bosmina, when sent by her father Fingal on an embassy of peace, as bearing in her right hand a sparkling shell, and in the left an arrow of gold,—the first the joyful mark of peace, the latter the sign of war. Allusion is also made by the poet to the wine of the strangers, *i.e.* the Romans, and the wax* taken in their warfare; this was during the expedition of Severus into the northern parts of Britain.

* Wax-lights are often mentioned as amongst the spoils.

ST. HELENA.

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"Coell ruled the realme in lawe and peace full well,
A doghter had he, and none other heyre,—
Eleyn that hight, farre passing good and fayre."
Harding's Chronicle.

"Of all the Christian world, that Empress most renowned,
Constantius' worthy wife."—*Drayton's Poly Olbion.*

In such terms as these are we introduced by the poets to the Empress Queen, St. Helena, whose fine character and whose romantic history afford a most brilliant and pleasing subject for biography.

Coel,[1] King of the Britons, the father of Helena, by some surnamed "the Hawk-Faced," began to reign over that portion of territory known in the present day as Essex and Hertfordshire, in the year 238,[2] and added the principality of North Wales to his dominions shortly after, by his marriage with Seradwen, its heiress, a princess descended of the royal house of Eudda,[3] whence in still later times came the—

"Pendragon kings of Uther's royal race,"

amongst whom was the celebrated Arthur.

The wife of Coel was the only daughter of Cadfan, son of Conan ap Eudda, King of Wales.

It is supposed by some writers that one daughter alone was born to the royal pair, the princess afterwards known as St. Helena; there were, however, three children; of whom the eldest was Tiboen, or Helena; the second, Guala, the British name of Julia; and the third, a prince who bore the maternal family designation of Conan.[4] Of this prince, who, on his father's death, retired, to govern over the northern territories acquired by his mother Seradwen, which are placed by one of our writers[5] at the wall of Antoninus, history almost entirely loses sight in following the more splendid fortunes of his two royal sisters, Helena and Julia; the one destined to create a new line of Emperors in the Roman world; the other, to transmit to her descendants that imperial dignity, which, through the royal current of the Pendragon family, descended to Cadwallader, the last

[1] Harding, Kennet, Baronius, Lewis, Polydore, Virgil, Baleus, and many others, assert that Helen was daughter of Coel, King of the Britons.

[2] Colchester Chronicle.

[3] Sir John Price, Warrington, Rowlands.

[4] Or, Cenan ap Coel; Rowland's Mona Antiqua.

[5] Carte, Gibbon.

British Prince of Wales of Roman descent, and passed on to the family of Tudor, of which Henry the Seventh was the first, and our present Sovereign Lady, Victoria, the latest royal representative.[1]

Helena was a name derived from the Greek, signifying "pitiful," and given in later times to Coel's daughter, by the Romans, on account of her compassionate disposition. Her true British name was Tiboen,[2] thus written in some Welch lines quoted by Mr. Rowlands:—

"Tiboen ferch Coel Godebog
I Grêd a gafoàd y Grôg."

Many other titles were borne by this excellent princess, such as the surname of "Lueddog," and the noble name of Flavia obtained on her marriage with Constantius, the descendant of Vespasian, who derived it

[1] The following table exhibits the House of Eudda:—

Eudda, King of North Wales.
|
Kynan, son of Eudda.
|
Cadfan, son of Kynan. Caradoc, brother of Cadfan.
|
Coel Godebog, married to Seradwen. = Seradwen, only daughter of Cadfan.
|
Ellen Lueddog. Guala. Kenan, son of Coel.

In this table* the name of Ellen Lueddog is substituted for that of Tiboen, or Helen, used by Mr. Rowlands, and for Dyfyn, the name attributed by Sir John Price to her.

[2] In the north of England, Tibby is still used as an abbreviation of Helen.

* Taken from Owen's Pedigrees.

from that Emperor, through his own great-uncle Claudius Gothicus. The title of Augusta was added when Helena was made Empress; consequently, by some historians she is called Flavia Julia Helena Augusta; her brilliant fortunes towards the close of her long career acquired her, moreover, the epithets of "the Prosperous" and "the Powerful;" and to crown the virtue and piety of this memorable princess with the highest distinction, the religious of after-ages have awarded to her the veneration of a saint; so that the name of St. Helena has descended to us with more than mere mortal celebrity.

Roman and British writers differ in many particulars respecting the life of the daughter of Coel. Those Greek and Latin authors who were her contemporaries, writing with the party-spirit of their times, have testified a partiality to the side of their own country, whenever its honour became placed in collision with that of Britain. As regards the history of a princess of British birth, the testimonials of her native historians are probably most to be depended upon, and may be considered as surer guides to truth.

The principal evidence extant, respecting the birth of St. Helena, is that of the "Colchester Chronicle," preserved in that city. According to this document, her birth took place at Colchester, about A.D. 242, four years after her father mounted the throne.[1] This testimony is not only universally admitted by British historians, and confirmed by foreign writers, but borne out by the local traditions of that neighbourhood; for from ages past, even to the present day, it has been the boast of the inhabitants of Colchester, that St. Helena was born there, and in commemoration of the holy cross

[1] Morant's Colchester, Baleus, Lewis.

which she afterwards discovered, the arms of the town are a knotty cross between four crowns.[1]

The erroneous idea taken up by some authors, of Helena being an only child, seems to have arisen from the superior pains bestowed on her education by her father, who destined her to become his successor on the throne. To be Queen of the Britons, even then, was a high and glorious destiny; but Coel could scarcely have imagined to what an eminence she would rise, when he predicted, from the precocity of Helena's talents, the distinction she would attain; and, in consequence, determined that her brother and sister should receive as their inheritance his northern states,[2] and the southern be appropriated to her, his eldest-born. Coel, however proud of her acquirements, could not then have contemplated, in this favourite child, the future Roman Empress,—one with whose name all the Roman as well the British Empire, should resound; nor could he dream that the daughter of a Pagan prince should lead the bright procession of Christian converts onward to an immortal and imperishable kingdom, unlike his, never to pass away! Yet such was the career marked out by Heaven for the Empress Queen of Constantius, the daughter of the British Coel.[3]

Gifted by nature in a preeminent degree, Helena's

[1] The following is the entry in the beginning of the ancient Record Book of that city, commonly called the Oath Book, which by the hand appears to have been written about the beginning of Edward III.'s reign: "A.D. 242, Helena filia Coelis nascitur in Colocestria." Morant's Colchester, Baleus, Geoffrey of Monmouth.

[2] At a later period, probably after Cenan ap Coel's death, the Princess Julia, marrying Edern ap Padarn, a northern prince, inherited her mother's Welsh estates.—*Owen's Pedigrees.*

[3] Leland, Camden, Glastonbury Historian, &c. Among those who call Helena a native of Britain, without naming Colchester, were Butler, Polydore Vergil, and Flavius Julius Dexter. St. Ambrose,

beauty surpassed that of any of the British maidens, her companions;[1] she possessed, moreover, "an innate brightness of wit, eloquence of speech, and elegant manners," which added still greater charms.[2] In a knowledge of the liberal arts, she is said not only to have surpassed her own countrywomen, but those of every other nation; and she was particularly distinguished by her taste for music, in which she had attained great proficiency. Spenser, in his "Faerie Queene," thus celebrates the praises of our Island Princess, whom he calls—

> "Fayre Helena, the fairest living wight,
> Who in all godly themes and goodly praise
> Did far excell, but was most famous hight
> For skill in musicke of all in her daies,
> As well in curious instruments as cunninge laies."

There seems to be no doubt that Helena was both a musician and a poetess, for certain literary works attributed to her are even now said to be extant; among which are noted a volume of Greek poems,—for Helena was deeply read in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin lore.[3] Even a royal lady of modern times might have been proud of the compliments lavished on the daughter of Coel by historians; one calling her "both fair, and wise, and good, and well lettered,"[4] while another designates her "a noble lady and a learned."[5]

She had arrived at her eighteenth year[6] when the

Cedrenus, Nicephorus, cited by Gibbon, and other modern writers, deny that she was a native of Britain. Camden tells us, only one author states she was born at Naissus; and Drake calls her a native of York, from the speech made by some English orators at the councils of Constance and Basil,—an opinion, he thought, which received confirmation from the anonymous panegyrist of her son Constantine.

[1] Owain's Chronicle. [2] Baleus. [3] Caxton.
[4] Holinshed. [5] Ibid. [6] Geoffrey of Monmouth.

event occurred which drew her forth from her studious life, and shed the first bright ray on the path of her future greatness. This was her marriage to Constantius, at that time only in the dawn of his own rising fortunes.

Flavius Valerius Constantius, surnamed "Chlorus," according to some historians, from the green garments he wore in childhood, or from his pale complexion, was of imperial descent, his mother Claudia being niece of the Emperor Claudius Gothicus.[1] His father, a noble lord of Illyria, was a native of Naissus, the capital of the Dardanian nation, which consisted of a great part of Mœsia, and there the earliest years of Constantius were passed. There also the orders of Aurelian, under whom the youth first bore arms, reached him. For these reasons the city was, in after-times, embellished by the filial affection of his son, Constantine the Great, with many noble buildings.

Though Aurelian never visited Britain in person, he was a great deal in Gaul during the wars with the usurpers; and Constantius also was there, no doubt, at that time, having entered the army at the age of fourteen, and being at the time of Aurelian's accession in his twentieth year, A.D. 270. Three years after, when Zenobia and Tetricus were being paraded in Rome, in the triumphal procession of Aurelian, Constantius was distinguishing himself, and obtained a great victory for the Romans, at Vindomessa, in Switzerland. He afterwards was known as "the conqueror of Spain,"[2] and was received into the body-guard of Probus. On the defeat of Bonosus and Proculus, by a singular coincidence we find Constantius, Carus, Dioclesian, and Maximian, walking together in triumphal procession

[1] Vie de Constantin; Leigh's Choice Observations.
[2] John Rous, Colchester Chronicle, Geoffrey of Monmouth.

into the Roman capital, each of whom were subsequently raised to the empire. Constantius afterwards commanded a legion as Tribune; and the Emperor Carus, who made him Governor of Dalmatia, had some thoughts of naming him his successor, instead of the worthless Carinus, his son. After Carinus and Numerican, sons of Carus, the empire devolved on Dioclesian, A.D. 284. It was to oppose Carinus that Dioclesian first created Maximian Cæsar; and afterwards, on the death of that Emperor, he saluted him as his own colleague and partner in the imperial dignity, A.D. 286.[1]

According to Platina, Constantius obtained a great victory in Gaul, under Probus, when several thousand German mercenaries were slain, through his bravery in renewing the fight after an unsuccessful engagement; and, in consequence, peace was restored to the province. It is certain that his uncle Claudius fought against the Gauls under Posthumus. The same author dates this event in A.D. 281, in which year Maximian Herculeus is said to have made himself master of Britain, it being ten years after Carausius was slain. We find that Dioclesian sent Maximian into Gaul to quell an insurrection, about two years before the creation of the Cæsars (Constantius and Galerius), and that he was afterwards created Augustus by Dioclesian.[2]

There seems every likelihood that in this campaign Constantius acted in co-operation with Maximian, but there is an error as to the date, as the victory of Probus occurred many years earlier, and most likely that was the date of Helena's marriage.

There seems no doubt that it was during the wars of the Empire against the usurpers in Gaul that Constantius paid his first visit to Britain.

One of the most formidable enemies of Rome at this

[1] Butler, Gibbon. [2] Platina.

period was Carausius, a man of great bravery, but mean birth, employed by the Empire to guard the frontiers of Britain from invasion. Maximian, then associated with Dioclesian, who had ordered him to be stationed at Boulogne for that purpose, finding he had turned the power invested in him to his own advantage, ordered him to be put to death; but Carausius escaped into Britain, where having many followers, he assumed the purple, and caused himself to be proclaimed Emperor. Maximian, unable to contend at the time until a fleet was prepared, permitted him to continue in his assumed power; and at this time Carausius boldly issued a medal, associating himself with Dioclesian and Maximian, of which the legend was—"THE PEACE OF THE THREE AUGUSTI."[1] After several years, Allectus was sent to reduce him to dependence on the Empire; but that traitor, uniting in his schemes, at first governed in his name, and afterwards betrayed and killed him, and ruled in his own behalf for the space of three years as Augustus. The Britons, oppressed by the tyranny of Allectus, placed themselves under the command of Asclepiodatus,[2] who, after slaying Allectus, assumed the supreme power for a time, and in his turn was doomed to fall in a contest with Coel, father of St. Helena.

The deceased Asclepiodatus was a Briton by birth,

[1] Hoffman's Univ. Lexicon.

[2] Bran ap Lyr, or Asclepiodatus,* began to reign A.D. 232, and his power lasted thirty years; he much injured the Roman authority, and the news of his death gave great joy at Rome.† The sister of Asclepiodatus was called Bronwen, the White-Necked; and Harlech Castle was anciently called Tôr Bronwen, because it was the place of her abode.‡

Carausius, keeping for his own use the booty he took from the

* Rowland's Mona. Antiq. † Holinshed.

‡ Pennant's Snowden.

and by descent Duke of Cornwall:[1] he was also a prætorian præfect, and led the Roman fleet; so that both he and his predecessor, Allectus, had assumed the supreme power in the Roman name. When, therefore, Coel conquered Asclepiodatus, it became necessary to vindicate the Empire, for he was not only a Briton, but king by ancient right of descent; and the Romans, fearing all authority in the island would cease to exist, despatched Constantius Chlorus to redeem their tarnished honour, and revive the laurels of his country.

Coel, having openly become, by the train of circumstances just detailed, the enemy of Rome,[2] Constantius, on his arrival, proceeded to lay siege to the city of Colchester, the capital of his dominions, which, as some say, was bravely defended for three years, but at length relieved, upon the Roman general entering into a treaty with the King for the hand of his daughter, "the fayre Helena." Some relate that Coel, knowing that Constantius was "a wise and bold man,"[3] and noted for bravery, sent, on his own part, ambassadors, to offer peace and submission to the Roman power, provided he was allowed to retain his kingdom, on payment of the usual tribute. With this Constantius complied, and Coel confirmed the treaty, by bestowing on the general the hand of his daugh-

Saxon pirates, made Maximian think that he connived at their piracies. The wealth earned by his exploits and reputation caused him to be hailed Augustus by the Britons. He is said to have built vessels of war, and the many medals struck by him, impressed with various devices and inscriptions, testify the pomp and splendour of his reign One of the coins of Carausius bears the ensigns of the Eternal City; and, as Sir F. Palgrave remarks, "it is very remarkable that the wolf and the twins are copied upon the rude mintage of Ethelbert, the Bretwalda or Emperor of Anglo-Saxon Britain."

[1] Carew's Survey of Cornwall.

[2] John Rous, Morant.

[3] John Rous.

ter,[1] when "Constantius espoused her with much honour."[2]

A romantic, but somewhat improbable, incident has been related, of the first introduction to each other of Constantius and Helena. It is said that the nurse, or "attendant maiden," of the princess, dreading the dangers to which her youth and beauty might be exposed, if she were beheld by any of the lawless soldiers of the Roman army then besieging the city, disguised her young mistress in humble attire as a poor maiden, and concealed her in the house of a countryman; but the precaution was in vain. The chance of war conducted Constantius to her retreat, who was so charmed with Helena, that he carried her off. On discovering, however, much to his surprise, that she was the King's daughter, he made her his wife.

To this important incident, if it really did occur, may be attributed some of the stories which have been circulated to the disadvantage of Helena, disputing the legality of her union with Constantius. The *Colchester Chronicle* itself mentions her, in some instances, as "*Concubina*;" and it becomes rather an important question, to inquire into the exact particulars of her union with Constantius.

The word "concubina" is sometimes used "*in bonem partem*" for a wife, as well as a concubine, and, in relation to Helena's tie, simply meant a lady of inferior dignity to the daughter of Maximian, whom Constantius espoused at an after-date. Marianus Scotus, who boldly defends Helena, says that she who was "a King's daughter, a Cæsar's wife, and an Emperor's mother, was no concubine." Two authors, however, have stigmatized her memory with this accusation—

[1] Geoffrey of Monmouth, John Rous, Warrington, Morant.
[2] Caxton.

Julian, the apostate, and Zosimus; of whom the former was an Emperor of Rome, who tried, by every means in his power, to subvert the attempts made by Helena and her son Constantine to establish the Christian faith; the latter a Greek historian and a pagan, who is noted, by ecclesiastical writers, as remarkable for the prejudice with which he has treated the Christian Emperors, and especially for his severity towards Constantine the Great.[1] St Ambrose, the only respectable witness against Helena,[2] asserts a startling fact, that Helena was first seen by Constantius in his march from Persia (when passing through Nicomedia), at an inn in the little town of Drepanum, where he had fixed his quarters.[3] Had this circumstance been known to Zosimus, the declared enemy of Constantine, he would not have failed to make use of it. Several other historians say, that the union of Constantius with Coel's daughter was not legal.[4] The author of the History of Colchester, adopting the record of that city, says: "The constant tradition amongst us has always been, that Helena had by Constantius her son Constantine born *before marriage;* but, soon after the birth, he married her, and adopted him." This tradition, preserved in the old British memoirs, is published by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and other authors of various times and nations, of whom Michael Alford, who wrote expressly on the subject, cites no less than seventy.[5]

There are, on the other hand, many who declare Helena to have been the lawful wife of Constantius. That elaborate writer, Mr. Butler, in his memoir, says,

[1] Aikin's Biography. [2] Crevier.

[3] St. Ambrose and Nicephorus both relate the same story, and the former has been copied by several French writers.

[4] Eusebius, Orosius, St. Jerome, Cassiodorus, and Bede.

[5] Morant.

"*it is certain she was married to him;*"[1] and Crevier, in his "Lives of Roman Emperors," speaks thus on this important point: "Some, even Christian authors, have disputed the marriage of Constantius, and thus rendered illegitimate the birth of Constantine. But, in reality, this opinion seems to have had no other foundation[2] than Helena's being of greatly inferior rank to her husband.[3] That excepted, everything conspires to make us look upon her as united to Constantius by a lawful alliance; the distinction which Constantine always enjoyed at Dioclesian's court, where he held the first rank next to the Emperor; the very circumstance of his being an hostage, which supposes him to have been dear to his father as a son destined to succeed him; and the great encomiums given by panegyrists to the chastity of Constantius, whom his son is praised for having imitated, which make it probable that Constantine was the legitimate son of Constantius Chlorus." Indeed, had any further proof of this been wanting, it was furnished afterwards by an address made to Constantine himself, on the occasion of his marriage to

[1] At Naples is still extant an inscription, in which Helena is styled the wife of Constantius. In two others, to be seen in Gruter, she is distinguished with the title of Augusta, which was never given, as is well known, to a concubine.

[2] Some writers call Helena "obscuri generis." Julius Flavius Dexta calls her "a chief woman of Britain," and Mr. Lewis, "a king's daughter," denying the assertion of her mean origin. As her father was "master of the horse to the Emperor," some have called her a horsekeeper's daughter; from that arose the title of "Comes Stabuli, or constable" (Lewis); but others again designate her as Stabularia, from her having built a church afterwards over the manger in which our Lord was laid at his birth. As well as the encomiums of historians on her virtue, she was, according to Polydore Vergil, "a very virtuous woman." See other authors, who speak of her in terms which could not have been bestowed on one who was exceptionable in one of the first of woman's attributes.

[3] Gibbon dismisses the question by saying, "We are obliged to confess that Helena was the daughter of an innkeeper."

Fausta, daughter of Maximian, by his learned and elegant, but unknown panegyrist, who, speaking of Constantius, says: "He had freed the provinces of Britain from slavery; you ennobled them by your origin!"

The enemies of her faith sought thus to disparage her memory; but the fact of a Roman Emperor, as Constantius afterwards became, having espoused a British woman, was, in those days, sufficiently extraordinary to create comments on the legality of the tie. Gwenissa, daughter of Claudius, is not even named by Roman writers, in their disdainful contempt of her alliance with the British Arviragus; and Helena's son is stigmatized as illegitimate, no doubt from similar reasons. The daughter of Coel was held to be a match beneath the dignity of the Roman name; yet it is not impossible that hers was what is yet known as *a hand-fast marriage* in Scotland, the country from the neighbourhood of which her mother came, and that this had given colour to the account of her son's illegitimacy. That Helena possessed great attractions, even in the eyes of one of the most wise and accomplished senators of Rome, is unquestioned; and the gentleness and amiability of Constantius in times of peace, as renowned as his bravery in war, must have confirmed the attachment of the island princess. Ample testimonials exist of the tender affection which subsisted between them, an affection still more strongly cemented by the birth of a son, to be afterwards known as Constantine the Great,[1]—a title bestowed on him for his many shining talents and great actions. Whether Britain or Dacia[2] was the birthplace of this prince has

[1] Platina's Lives of the Popes.

[2] That Britain was Helena's own birthplace and that of her son Constantine is, according to Camden, "what all historians who have

been a subject of dispute, literary and national, as well it might, for honours are coveted by all; but the general opinion is that Constantine was born at Colchester, the native city of Helena, and can consequently be claimed as British. This would never have been questioned, but that Helena, subsequently to her marriage, at times accompanied her husband in his foreign campaigns. Nor is it the least convincing proof of the legality of Helena's tie with Constantius, that the latter entrusted this son, the child of his dearest affections, to the maternal care of Helena for his education, knowing that her enlightened and cultivated mind fitted her for so arduous a task.

It is an acknowledged fact, that in the history of nearly all those individuals who have attained an eminent distinction for great or good qualities, the hand of a mother may be traced as implanting the first seeds which riper years have matured. How honourable was the appellation of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchii! How high a lustre is still shed on the name of Helena—when added to it is that title which speaks volumes in her praise—the mother of Constantine the Great!

Mr. Morant, in his History of Colchester, says, the city walls were most probably built in the times of the Romans. He remarks, "the west wall reached as far as St. Helen's Lane. On the north and east side the castle was secured by a ditch and rampart of earth.

written on that subject, except Cedrenus and Nicephorus, affirm with one voice." Julius Fermicus, a Christian writer, who lived soon after the death of Constantius, says, in his work "On the Error of Profane Religion," that Constantine was born at Tarsus, near Nicomedia, in Bithynia, a town of Dacia. Others fix his birth at Naissus, near the Dardanelles (Bayle's Dictionary); but there the son is confounded with the father. (See Camden and Butler.)

This rampart is thrown up upon a wall that formerly encompassed either the castle or the palace of Coel, on the site whereof the castle is built, the buttresses, and other parts of which, have been lately discovered." That Colchester had strong walls and a castle subsequent to this period, is a fact attested by the remains of both, even in the present day. The castle was built by Edward the Elder, who also repaired the city walls; and, says the same writer, "if there were any remains of Coel's palace, he might perhaps bestow some pains in repairing that too, and making it a kind of fortification. The present castle was built after the Norman Conquest."

As the walls of London are said to have been built by Helena about this date,[1] Colchester was very probably fortified at the same time; for Constantius would naturally be anxious to defend his capital against the hostile incursions of neighbouring princes. Many writers attribute the walls of Colchester to Helena rather than to her father,[2] and it is beyond question that Constantius, who displayed great talent in architectural designs, assisted his consort in the undertaking. Britain is said to have owed many of her public works and ornaments to Constantius, who invited over architects from abroad to assist in carrying out his plans for the

[1] Miscellaneous History. The creeks about Colchester and the Mersey Island are celebrated for their fine oyster-beds: this fact alone rendered it a favourite residence with the Romans. It was from this people we first learnt the art of fattening our oysters in artificial beds, the feeding-pits being first invented about ninety years before Christ, and the place where they were first constructed was upon the shore of Baiæ. Even as early as the reign of Vespasian, the British oyster was deemed famous among their luxurious Roman conquerors, and thought worthy to be carried into Italy.*

[2] Stowe, John Rous.

* Whittaker; Britton and Brayley.

advantage of the people and security of the Roman government. The city of Worcester is said to be of his foundation.[1] It is not, therefore, surprising that the oldest parochial church in the city should bear the name of St. Helen. Chlorendon Park, near Sarum, in Wiltshire, received from him its name of "Chloren," which, some say, had been given him by the Britons on account of his wearing a long train which was carried after him, this being the toga or robe which betokened his rank as a senator of Rome. Chlorendon, now Clarendon Park, says Mr. Kennet, "is a park the size of which exceeds any park in the kingdom; in the north part of which, next Chloren, is a church covered over with ivy, called Ivy Church; and to give credit to a late poet, the park had in it twenty groves, each of which was a mile in compass, and it contained a house of the king's within it, but long since dilapidated." In the time of Constantius, a fortification was built by that prince on the side of the down near Sarum, of which the ramparts are yet remaining; it bore the name of Chloren, like the park in which the Roman King of Britain designed to make his own residence.[2]

For some years after Coel's death Constantius remained in Britain, adding improvements for the public benefit, and maintaining the security of the Roman interest. During this interval he paid the customary tribute on his own account to the Roman Emperor.[3]

Several children were born to the Roman King of Britain; the name of the eldest does not appear. A

[1] Green's History of Worcester.

[2] One of the groves in Chlorendon Park yet remains to attest its Roman origin, being composed of chesnut. The chesnut was first introduced into Britain from Lydia by our Roman conquerors, and, in all likelihood, first by Constantius himself.

[3] Lewis.

quarrel had arisen between him and his younger brother Lucius, and he was unhappily killed by the latter; for which Constantius exiled the fratricide from Britain, appointing him to dwell in Aquitaine. The penitent prince subsequently embraced the Christian faith, and entered the Church, first becoming an elder, and afterwards bishop. "He built a house of prayer, in which he and his followers worshipped God."[1]

During the interval between the death of Coel and Constantius mounting his throne in Britain, and that in which he succeeded to the Roman empire, this great man made more than one campaign abroad; and under all the changing vicissitudes of the roving life of Constantius, Helena and her first-born son, Constantine, were his constant companions.

The daughter of Coel afterwards accompanied her husband in his campaigns abroad. We are expressl, informed[2] that Constantius, who "surpassed all others in his endeavours to increase the Roman commonwealth,[3] accompanied by his *wife*, Flavia Helena Augusta passed out of Britain into Germany, attended by an infinite number of Britons, of whom it is thought the

[1] As this prince's history does not appear again in conjunction with that of Constantius and Helena, it may be named here, that Constantine, his brother, after his own conversion and accession to the empire, promoted Lucius to several ecclesiastical situations; who finally went into Rhetia, accompanied by his sister Emerita, and near the city of Augusta, converted the Curienses to the faith of Christ. He was put to death in the Caster Martis, and buried in the city of Augusta, where his festival was kept on the 3rd of December. The truth of these particulars is attested by the abbey founded by Prince Lucius, and an ancient hymn composed to his honour, entitled "Gaude Lucionem." Emerita, daughter of Helen, also was martyred in Trinicastell, where her brother Lucius dwelt.*

[2] By Lewis, in Hist. of Britain. [3] John Rous.

* Hermanus Schedelius, Holinshed.

city Bretta derived its name."[1] Constantius was founder of the city of Constantine, in Normandy. The sea adjoining Bithynia, from this Empress also, was called Helenapontus, or Hellespont.[2]

A period of reverse, however, was at hand, which was destined to throw a deep shade over the mother and son. The details which led to this misfortune must necessarily be given.

About six years after those revolutions in the mighty empire of Rome, which had associated Dioclesian and Maximian in the cares of supreme power, the joint Emperors agreed to elect two Cæsars as their colleagues, each of whom, by being appointed ruler over a certain portion of dominions belonging to them, should render assistance in preserving order over their extended empire. The persons on whom their choice fell were Galerius and Constantius, and to the proposed honour about to be conferred one only condition was affixed, one calculated to insure the dignity of those elected, that of each becoming the adopted son, or rather son-in-law, of the two Emperors. It was previously determined by Dioclesian and Maximian, that in case of the newly created Cæsars being already married, they should repudiate their wives, and be left free to espouse the imperial brides destined to them. Galerius was originally a shepherd of Illyria, but had afterwards become a soldier of Rome; his character was a mixture of cruelty and bravery. His pride at such an advancement to fortune made him willingly agree to put away from him his wife, for he also was married, and he received the hand of the fair Valeria; by which the general who had led his army before the victory, became second only in rank to his imperial father-in-law Dioclesian and his colleague. Had his worth been far greater, he might well have been

[1] Lewis. [2] John Rous.

proud of receiving the hand of a bride so amiable as the highly gifted Valeria, who, as well as her mother, stood high in the estimation of the Romans: he dismissed, therefore, without a sigh the partner of his humbler fortunes, and took his new honours cheerfully. With Constantius Chlorus the circumstances were different in all respects.

The beautiful Flavia Theodora was not indeed the daughter of Maximian, but of his wife, the Empress Galeria Valeria Eutropia, by a noble Syrian who had died shortly after the birth of this, their only child. The widow's beauty had attracted many admirers, and amongst others Herculeus Maximian, who, though in person more calculated to inspire terror than love, was successful in his suit. Eutropia being dazzled by the prospect of an imperial diadem, as soon as her appointed time for mourning was at an end, gave her hand to Maximian, and the first link was wrought by that step for the future fortunes of Theodora. From that time Rome had had two reigning Emperors, and two Empresses had presided over the female world of Rome, Prisca and Eutropia, entirely different in character, though so nearly allied in rank and dignity. Prisca, wife of Dioclesian, adorned the throne by her virtue and good sense, while a Christian by practice as well as precept, she viewed without distrust or jealousy her beautiful rival Eutropia, who, naturally disposed to gaiety and diversion, though she had, at her first elevation, cautiously concealed her levity of character, soon yielded herself up to its dictates. Entirely indifferent to her husband, she encouraged admirers, and allowed the attentions of a handsome Syrian; yet so far was Maximian from resenting Eutropia's conduct, that he appeared blind to this intimacy. His great desire for an heir who might perpetuate the honours of his family was

vainly indulged during some years. When, therefore, the infant Maxentius was born, in spite of the evil reports of his wife's fidelity, he hailed the event with transports of joy, and brought the child up with the utmost care and expense as his own son and heir to an empire. The near relationship of Constantius to his Empress was one reason why Maximian had determined to ally him with his daughter-in-law; and he had, moreover, stipulated with Dioclesian that he should become his successor in the Empire. It was known to both, that the person whom their policy selected was already the husband of a British woman of royal lineage, whose inheritance he now enjoyed, and by whom he had, moreover, become father of several children; but it did not enter into their minds to compare the obscure Helena with the brilliant, beautiful, and witty Theodora, or weigh in the same balance the petty throne of a British State with the imperial diadem of Rome!

The struggle was great in the mind of Constantius. Nevertheless the imperial will could not be thwarted, though Constantius betrayed an evident reluctance to the marriage with Theodora; he could not forget that by divorcing himself from Helena, still tenderly beloved, an ignominious stain would be cast on the birth of her young son Constantine, now in the bloom of youth and hope.

It is said that the earnest solicitations of Helena alone decided him; regardless of herself at this trying moment, she was earnest in her exhortations to her husband to accept a step so calculated to promote his present personal advantage. He consented, accordingly, to a separation from Helena; and Dioclesian, by taking every step necessary to give publicity to their divorce, furnished the world with the most conclusive

proof that their marriage had been valid.[1] After every necessary step had been taken, Constantius espoused Theodora at Milan, and was forthwith invested with the government of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, with the enviable title of Cæsar,[2] for which he had sacrificed so much.

Theodora, shortly after her marriage, returned with him into Britain, accompanied by her mother; but while to her he became, and remained to the last, a faithful, kind and affectionate husband, his feelings towards Helena may be best conceived by the fact of the first act of his newly acquired sovereignty being to present his divorced Queen, the mother of his son, with the robe of imperial purple, by this means testifying to the world, his own sense, that she was in every respect deserving of the high rank to which he had been elevated, and which fortune alone had denied to her.

Notwithstanding this empty honour, the fate of Helena was rendered still more severe, by Constantine being taken from Britain, and from her care, by his

[1] Platina, in his "Lives of the Popes," says, "Constantine was the son of Constantius by Helena, whom yet he afterwards divorced to gratify Herculeus."

[2] Every preliminary being settled, the ceremony of inaugurating the new Cæsars was performed. On the first day of March, A.D. 292, Dioclesian having assembled the troops in a place about three thousand paces distant from Nicomedia, ascended an eminence, presented Galerius to the soldiery, and, with their consent, invested him with the purple. The same honour was probably conferred on Constantius by Maximian in some one of the cities of Gaul or Italy.

The two Cæsars had every attribute of imperial power but the title of *August*, which remained with Dioclesian and Maximian. They had the tribunitian authority, the name of Emperors, that of Fathers of their Country, and of the high priesthood. Constantius, however, as noblest by birth, though adopted by the second of the Augusti, was considered the first of the two Cæsars, and on all public monuments his name, to which he had added that of *Herculeus*, was placed before that of Galerius. The anonymous author of Constantine's life, published by Valesius, writes in express terms that Constantius divorced Helena to marry Theodora, and Eutropius that Constantine was the fruit of an obscure but lawful matrimony.

father, and placed at the court of Dioclesian, as a hostage for his mother's fidelity to Rome. The jealous caution with which, from that moment, he was watched in all his movements, proves not only his legitimacy, and the regard by which he was esteemed by his parents, but the Emperor's fear, lest sooner or later, like Bonosus and Proculus, he should assume the sovereign power in Britain, to which his birth by Helena, and right as grandson of Coel, justly entitled him. While still an inhabitant of the imperial palace of Dioclesian, the situation of Constantine was evidently that of a dependent guest and suspected captive,—a state of bondage exchanged only for a worse, when upon Constantius requesting his son might be permitted to accompany him on his return to Britain, the Emperor, to avoid complying with the desire of the father, sent the prince to join the army in Persia and Egypt under Galerius:[1] there the young Briton distinguished himself in the Egyptian war by his valour during several severe actions; and there, until his father's approaching death recalled him to Britain, he remained, spending the best years of his life in the society of those who were enemies of the Christian faith, which in after-times he was called upon to protect, and separated from the nearest and dearest of his own relatives.

At this time four imperial courts were established in the Roman world, in different directions: that of Dioclesian, who maintained the government of Asia and Africa, and as prior Augustus, had supreme power over the rest of the empire; that of Maximian Herculeus who governed Italy and Spain; of Galerius, who ruled Illyria, Thrace, Macedonia, and Syria; and of Constantius, who had received Gaul and Britain. The latter showed his affection for the country which had given

[1] Crevier's Roman Emperors.

birth to Helena and Constantine, by fixing the seat of his government at York, whither his bride and the Empress, her mother, had accompanied him.

There, while the meek and excellent Helena, with pious fortitude, was mourning in her lonely widowhood, the loss of a beloved husband, and separation from a dearly cherished son, Theodora, at the distance of a few hundred miles, enjoyed the sweet intercourse of daily association in conjugal affection, which Helena had lost, with one who could not have been known without commanding love and reverence. Constantius, indeed, never acquired that surname of "Great," which admiring ages had reserved for his son by Helena, but he certainly merited, by his public virtues, the appellation of "the Good." Apart from his selfish repudiation of Helena, he exhibited many excellent qualities, and was looked upon as the father and friend of the people.[1]

So mild and moderate was the Roman Cæsar in his dominion, that during the greater part of his reign tranquillity prevailed in Britain. His habits were regular, and he respected virtue. Securely resting on the affections of the people, who loved him for his own goodness, and anxiety to promote their happiness. Constantius did not consider it necessary to exhibit the pomp and ostentation of the Roman Emperors; so great an admirer was he of simplicity, that when he did give an entertainment, he borrowed of his friends plate to furnish his table: one of the sayings ascribed to him was this, "that he had rather the riches of the state should be dispersed in several hands than locked up in one coffer." Dioclesian differed in opinion from Constantius, and blamed him for levying so few taxes that his treasury was empty, observing that "a prince

[1] Green, Crevier, Warrington.

ought not to be poor." On which we are told that this great man sent for the richest of the inhabitants of York and informed them that he was in want of money, and should be glad if they would show their attachment by a voluntary gift. His treasury was soon filled; when Constantius remarked to the Roman envoy of Dioclesian that, "he had just collected together those things that had long been his;" adding, "I left them in the keeping of their possessors, who, as you see, have been faithful to their trust." The deputies returned to Rome, filled with admiration, of not only the ruler but the people; and Constantius on his part, restored to his subjects the money they had so readily contributed for his service.[1]

In no particular did Constantius become more conspicuous than in his forbearance towards the Christians during the frightful persecution which signalized the reign of Dioclesian. This ancient "reign of terror" began in the family of the persecutor himself, and, sad to recount, was first instigated by a woman. The mother of Galerius had inflamed that prince against Christianity, who, in his turn, instigated Dioclesian to extirpate the faith of Christ, and spread the worship of their own gods. The Emperor first ordered his wife Prisca, and Valeria, the young wife of Galerius, to assist in sacrifices made to idols. Both ladies had received the baptismal rite, and had been encouraged by their own learning and genius to seek the society of those orators and writers who explained their new faith. But they knew that if they disobeyed the command of the Emperor, whatever his assumed regard for them, they must expect to die. Love of life, weakness of faith, or easiness of temper, led them, therefore, in the end, to worshi those idols their hearts refused to

[1] Crevier.

acknowledge; a weakness in such high examples which many readily followed, while others stood forth in defence of their faith, and, to the number of 17,000, fell victims for conscience sake. The church in Nicomedia was levelled with the ground, and the very next day an edict appeared, depriving all Christians of their rank, and of the benefit of the laws, and exposing them to torture.[1]

The persecution, which raged at that time, spread throughout the Roman world, two provinces alone excepted; these were Gaul and Britain, which escaped by the timely interposition of the merciful and humane Constantius.[1] That prince, though compelled with reluctance to demolish the Christian churches throughout his dominions,[2] preserved the persons of the followers of Christ from harm; yet he could not prevent some of the atrocities which marked this period of bloodshed. Among the British martyrs were Aaron and Julius, A.D. 303, and St. Alban, who are said to have suffered cruel torments: a church was afterwards raised[3] to the memory of each. This persecution endured for two years and two months, throughout the Roman Empire, when many persons of both sexes suffered death;[4] it was happily terminated in A.D. 305 by Constantius becoming Emperor. To try the hearts of his courtiers, Constantius proclaimed that all those who forsook the worship of the true God, should be banished the court, and that heavy penalties and fines should be imposed upon them; thereupon, all those who were base enough to serve him only for their own views went away, forsook the true God, and worshipped idols, by which means he found out who

[1] Milner.

[2] Eusebius. Amongst others, the splendid minster of Lucius, at Westminster, was levelled with the ground at this epoch.

[3] In the city of Caerleon, where they were interred. A choir of nuns graced the church of Julius, and a famous order of canons that of Aaron.

[4] Kippis, Milner.

were the true servants of God, and whom he intended to make his own, thinking rightly that such as were faithful to their God, would prove so to him.

Did the inhabitants of Britain, as some have asserted, owe this interposition of Constantius in favour of Christianity to his own belief in its doctrines, or to his recollection that it was the religion of his divorced Queen St. Helena? We have high authority for the fact, that Constantius was distinguished for Christian piety, and had been the founder of a metropolitan see at York. Some say that Constantius had received the faith and the rite of baptism in the seventh year of his empire, Pope Sylvester officiating in the solemn ceremony; and we are assured that it was the constant desire of Helena to advance the Christian faith, which first stimulated this Emperor to favour the Christians. If it be true that Helena was herself a professor of its doctrines prior to her divorce, it must have deeply affected the heart of Constantius to behold her, on that painful separation, so entirely resign herself by its influence to her hopeless fate. The widowed wife and childless mother had submitted to her lot in so meek and uncomplaining a manner, as to prove her just claim to the title of Christian, and her example must have had its effect. Released from the matrimonial tie, she sought not again to enter into the married state, and most probably the reflections in this season of bitter trial in the life of Helena, laid the foundation for her own future greatness as well as that of her son.

In memory of this period of suffering, the African marigold has been placed in our floral calendars on St. Helena's Day, August 18th, as it is a flower betokening grief, or distress of mind, and is thus appropriately emblematical of the feelings of the deserted Empress.[1]

[1] The African marigold blossoms all the year round, and was.

There is also a sentiment attached to the blossoms of the flower called helenium, which resemble small suns, of a beautiful yellow colour, and is said to have been produced by "the tears of Helena."

It is not positively certain that Helena[1] or Constantius were Christians at this period, though there seems some foundation for the supposition. That Christianity had obtained a footing in Britain long ere this, has been shown, and that it it was professed even in the family of Constantius himself is equally certain.

During the residence of the Emperor at York, the Empress Theodora had borne him six children, all of whom were educated in Britain; the sons were Dalmatius, Julius Constantius, and Annibalianus: the daughters were Constantia, Anastasia, and Eutropia. To all Constantius proved a kind and tender parent, but the first of these royal princesses, Constantia, requires some especial notice, as her after-history becomes much connected with that of Helena and her own half-brother Constantine.

At a very early age, Constantia studied the works of Arian, and became from the first his sincere disciple, though he had not then acquired any name, and at a subsequent period she was his powerful patron. Constantia was influenced in adopting the sect of Arianism, being already a Christian, by her friend and preceptor Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia. She was singularly

therefore, termed by the Romans the flower of the calends—in other words, of all the months. The flowers are said always to turn towards the sun, and to follow his course from east to west. Thus Marguerite of Navarre, the maternal grandmother of Henry IV, chose it for her device, with the motto, "Je ne veux suivre que lui seul," intimating that all her thoughts and affections were turned towards Heaven, as the marigold towards the sun. See "Language of Flowers."

[1] Baleus calls Helena the most Christian mother of Constantine, and Lluyd tells us that the young prince was brought up by her in the Christian faith, which she herself professed.

steady in her opinions, once formed, nor could she be won over to those of others, but her peculiar views caused afterwards much disadvantage and inconvenience to a church which required unity in its several members for its support.[1] The princess was endowed with rare beauty, and possessed also "masculine courage, discretion, prudence, and virtue, she had a judgment which penetrated the most solid affairs, much eloquence, an unshaken firmness and resolution, and a happy art of reconciling any differences which arose among those who surrounded her." Constantia's character and profession of faith might have caused Constantius to show leniency to the Christians, even were he not himself a believer in the sacred truths of religion.

It was not long after this cruel persecution that Constantius was called from his earthly dominions. He was seized with his last illness while occupied in an expedition against the Picts and Scots, and finding his life drawing towards its close, the Emperor's heart naturally yearned to behold the son who had been snatched from him just on his arrival at manhood. A messenger conveyed to Galerius the request of his dying colleague, that he would send home his son as soon as possible.[2] Galerius delayed, as long as he could, the fulfilment of this duty. For a long time past he had regarded the "son of Helena" with the eyes of a jealous rival, and, seeking his destruction, had on various occasions placed him in positions of certain peril. Constantine's life had been risked against the Sarmatians in war, but he returned victorious to Galerius, carrying with him the enemy's king as his prisoner; and the Emperor regretted the conquest which spared the British prince. On another occasion, Constantine, ardently desirous to win renown and

[1] Lives of the Empresses. [2] Milner.

honour, undertook, by persuasion of Galerius, to fight with a wild beast in the theatre. The spectators, in wonder, beheld the animal slain by the youthful prince; but Galerius smiled, for he meant yet further to ensnare him into danger.[1] At last, however, the prince perceived his aim, and resolved to escape from court to Britain, and join his father. At this juncture, the news of the dangerous illness of Constantius reached him. Surrounded by the spies of Galerius, who watched his slightest movement, he made his escape by stealth. His perils were numerous, and in order to evade pursuit and retard the speed of those who sought to overtake him in his flight, Constantine was forced to resort to the expedient of maiming at every post the horses which were not necessary for his flight—a cruel resource, yet, under his circumstances, excusable, for he was no doubt flying for his life, besides his desire to behold his dying parent.[2] In this way he succeeded in reaching Britain, where he arrived only a few days before his father breathed his last, and on proceeding to York, had the melancholy satisfaction of beholding once more his mother, from whom he had been so long and painfully divided.[3]

Constantius, during the brief interval which intervened between the arrival of Constantine and his own death, was requested to name his successor in the Empire, to which entreaty he gave the following memorable reply: "That he would have none other than the most pious Constantine," thus setting aside the claims of the children of Theodora in favour of his son by Helena, and giving a final proof of his attachment to his first wife, and the legality of her union with him. His decision was received with approbation by the

[1] Lewis.
[2] Gibbon calls this "a foolish story."
[3] Milner, Lingard.

army, and the purple robe was thrown over the prince's shoulders, who on this occasion is said to have shed tears, and clapped spurs to his horse, to escape the importunities of all those who pressed around him to proffer the imperial dignity.[1] How different had been the conduct of Caracalla, another Emperor's son, on a similar occasion!

A.D. 306, Constantius died, fourteen years after he had become Cæsar, having enjoyed the dignity of Emperor the two last years of his life;[2] his memory was held in such esteem, that he was afterwards deified. His last mortal remains were deposited at York, in the Church of St. Helen, in Aldwark. This building stood near the walls of the city, but there are no remains in the present day. Some suppose that it was erected by Constantine on his conversion, over the remains of his father, especially as the name of St. Helen is affixed to the building. The main street, which now bears the name of Aldwark, to mark its antiquity,[3] was so designated by the Saxons; it adjoins St. Anthony's Hall and the Roman Imperial Palace, described in the life of the Empress Julia, is supposed to have extended from Christ Church to this street.[4] Camden relates that the remains of Constantius were discovered in a vaulted tomb within a little chapel at York, and adds "on the authority of several intelligent inhabitants of that city, that when this vault, which had by tradition been marked as the place where the ashes of Constantius reposed, was opened, a lamp was found burning within

[1] Leigh's Choice Observations.

[2] In 1283, when preparations were making for the erection of Caernarvon Castle, a body, supposed to be that of Constantius, was discovered there. King Edward gave orders that it should be honourably re-interred in the Church of St. Publicius, a descendant of the family of Helena.—Matthew, West, Pennant.

[3] *Ald* implies old, and *wark* a building.

[4] Allen's York; Milner's Church History; Green's History of Worcester.

it, but which was soon extinguished by the communication of the air; for it was a Roman custom to preserve lights in their sepulchres for a long time, which art they accomplished by the *oylines* of gold resolved into a liquid substance."

Helena, who had passed the prime of life, for she was now in her fifty-fourth year, in a quiet obscurity, at a distance from those whose presence would have made life so dear, was now destined to emerge from her solitude, and assume an eminent position in the vast theatre of the world. It was she who had implanted the first principles of virtue in the bosom of the great Constantine, who had set in motion all those secret springs which were to bear him onwards to glory and greatness, and she was called upon in her own person to direct the career of that victorious child.

Without ambition for herself—for that failing had never formed part of Helena's character—she had none of those vain-glorious emotions which usually animated her contemporaries; all her feelings were absorbed in one, that of ennobling the name of the beloved son who had blessed her too brief union with Constantius, and who in spite of difficulties had inherited his imperial destiny. To guard that son from the perils of his high station, to assist him by her maternal advice, derived from the many years' experience of her own royal sway, and in her late humbler position, was the coveted duty of this exalted and estimable woman, and worthily did she acquit herself of the important office. If Helena did not witness either the arrival of her long-lost son, or the last moments of her departing Constantius, it is certain that no sooner was Constantine recognised successor to the Empire, than she repaired to the Imperial Court of York; and many places in that city and the north of England yet remain to attest by her name that there she was once present.

Theodora, her mother, and her children, were now become the guests of Constantine; they continued in the Imperial Palace, and under this painfully distressing change in their destiny, beheld nothing in the conduct of the new Emperor, or of his amiable mother, which could in any way remind them, by the smallest neglect or humiliation, of the bitter loss they had sustained. On the removal of the court from Britain, they accompanied it into Italy.

Not less difficult and trying was this sudden change of situation for Helena, than was that in which she had been divided for ever from her husband. She was now called upon daily to meet and associate, in the bonds of affection and kindliness of spirit, with the widowed Empress who had supplied her place on the throne of Constantius; and to guard over and protect her and her children, as the nearest ties of one so dear to herself. This hard duty, accompanied with all the recollections of the departed Constantius, Helena achieved. She had exchanged the dignity of Queen of the Britons for the more elevated rank of Empress-Mother of Rome. The dutiful Constantine, now that he had attained the summit of grandeur, desired only to make use of his new power to serve that mother whom he had always loved and reverenced. He publicly testified the immense debt of gratitude he felt was due to her long-tried affection by raising her at once to all the dignities of a Roman empress. He caused her to be proclaimed Augusta in his armies, introducing her to the soldiery with more distinction than Agrippina had ever enjoyed;[1] Helena not having had the dignity of Augusta during the lifetime of Constantius,[2] it was bestowed on her by her son, as though he desired to compensate to her for the deprivation of an honour by her divorce, which she

[1] Butler. [2] Selden's Titles of Honour.

had been entitled to. He likewise caused medals to be struck, bearing her effigy, with her names, Flavia Julia Helena. One of these coins has, on one side, a female standing with a branch in her right hand, and the inscription "securitas Republicæ," and on the other side, the words Flavia Julia Helena, round the head of the Empress.

Ancient inscriptions style Helena "Venerabilis et pietissima Augusta,"[1] and some of these give to her the imperial attributes.[2]

Many stones yet extant bear the attributes of Empresses given to Helena, such as "Venerabilis Domina," "Clarentissima," "Charissima," and Domina nostra."[3] Besides these dignities, Constantine admitted Helena to council, as Alexander Severus had formerly done his mother Mammæa; and thus was the Empress-Mother enabled to confer on her country a train of benefits almost unexampled, while the hitherto enslaved island of Britain, under its new rulers, emerged from barbarism, and began to taste the many advantages of civil and religious freedom. It was to the influence of Helena, at this period, that Britain was indebted for some of its greatest and most durable benefits; for not only had Constantine admitted her into his councils, but he gave her power to carry out all she might desire to achieve for her country, by placing her at the same time at the head of his exchequer. In doing so he paid the highest compliment to her discretion, as monetary resources were at that moment in the greatest requisition, and Helena did not act in a manner to make the Emperor regret his confidence had been so reposed.[4]

From the period of the death of Constantius, to that

[1] Green's Worcester.
[2] Selden. [3] Butler.
[4] Some money of Constantine is said to have been discovered in the walls of the ancient city of Allcester.—Kennet.

in which Maxentius was defeated near Rome by Constantine, there was an interval of six years. This period was doubtless occupied in adjusting the affairs of Gaul and Britain, over which Constantius had especially ruled.

Leland speaks of the City of London as enlarged and fortified by Constantine at the request of Helena.[1] The manner in which the walls were built was discovered at a later date, in laying the foundation for a new wall.[2] They are thus described by William Fitz Stephen, who died in 1171: "The wall of the city is high and great, continued with seven gates, which are made double, and on the north distinguished with turrets by spaces; likewise on the south, London hath been enclosed with walls and towers, but the large river of Thames, well stored with fish, and in which the tide ebbs and flows, by continuance of time hath washed, worn away, and cast down those walls."

The Saxon Chronicle confirms the fact of the existence of these walls, by saying that "in 1052, Earl Godwin, with his navy, passed along the southern side of the river, and so assailed the walls."

While these great works progressed, Constantine made every arrangement for the public security and welfare of Britain. He divided the country into five provinces, named Britannia Prima, Valentia, Britannia Secunda, Flavia Cæsariensis, and Maxima Cæsariensis.[3]

[1] Lewis, Hist. of Britain. [2] Stowe.

[3] Holinshed. The countries they comprehended were as follows:—

The 1st province, or Britannia Prima, the east part of England, from the Trent to the Tweed.

2nd, Valentia,* the left side, from Liverpool to Cockermouth.

3rd, Britannia Secunda, that part of the isle which lay south, between the Trent and the Thames.

4th, Flavia Cæsariensis, all that country between Dover and the Severn, including Cornwall and Wales.

5th, Maxima Cæsariensis, or Scotland.

* Or Valentina.

Constantine appointed that each of these five provinces should be ruled by a vicegerent, five rectors, two consulars, and three presidents; but from that time till the reign of Valentinian, no account is given of the manner in which the government was conducted after the son of Helena quitted his native country.

In early youth Constantine had allied himself to Minervina, supposed to be a British lady, by whom he had a son named Crispus. He afterwards had espoused Fausta,[1] daughter of Maximian, the enemy of Christianity, a lady who was the half-sister of Theodora, the Empress of Constantius. Maximian had contracted this alliance for Fausta from motives of state policy. Twice driven from his throne by the unworthy Maxentius, his adopted son, Maximian took refuge with Constantine, who at that time was residing in the palace of Trèves.[2] Though the Emperor could scarcely forget a revolt which Maximian had formerly kindled against him at Marseilles, he received him with the utmost generosity and clemency. Maximian repaid this by raising a new plot against his life. He endeavoured to gain over his daughter Fausta to send away the Emperor's guards during the night, and to leave his apartment open to him. Presents, prayers, promises, and threats were employed to seduce the unhappy Empress. If she betrayed her father by a word, she knew it would be to die; if silent, her husband's life was the

[1] Three sons of Constantine by the Empress Fausta were afterwards placed over the provinces. Constantine, the eldest, over the Gauls, Spain, and Britain; Constans over Illyricum, Italy, and Africa; and Constantius over the East.

Constans was founder of Caer Segont, which was also called Hengaer, the old town which stood by the site of the modern Caernarvon.—Kennett.

[2] The city of Treves was honoured with the title of Augusta, it was a Roman colony, and the residence of several emperors, who had the care of superintending their possessions in Gaul.

price at stake. At last she promised obedience to Maximian, but conjugal affection led her to discover his secret to Constantine. The Emperor could not believe his aged father-in-law capable of such treachery, and sacrificed the life of an eunuch to prove the fact. The unfortunate victim, of a class held in no esteem except as serviceable to their master, was placed on the couch of Constantine, who, dismissing his guards, concealed himself in the chamber. In the dead of night, Maximian entered, and finding the passage cleared for his approach, advanced to the bed, when he buried his poniard repeatedly in the slave's bosom, exclaiming, "My enemy is dead. I am master of the Empire!" The sight of Constantine changed his joy to despair; he beheld with horror the threatening countenance of his supposed victim: the day of grace was past; Constantine pardoned him not again, and he fell a sacrifice to his insatiable ambition![1]

This was the first[2] who fell by the death-doom of one merciful by nature, but who gained sternness and severity by the circumstances of his own fortunes. In Maximian, the colleague of his late imperial father, Constantine destroyed the father-in-law of Theodora, the husband of Eutropia, the father of Fausta, and grandfather of his own sons. It seemed a horrible alternative, yet certainly no safety on a throne could have been enjoyed, had Maximian continued to exist.

Perhaps this conspiracy against the life of Constantine alarmed the maternal feelings of Helena, and

[1] Hist. Universelle.

[2] At a later period Licinius, the husband of Constantia, his sister, and her son, were put to death by him; but the fate of Licinius was deserved, when his crimes towards the wife and daughter of Dioclesian are considered.—See Gibbon.

actuated her conduct in future towards the sons of Theodora. These three young princes, Dalmatius, Constantius, and Annibalianus, had been promoted by Constantine to the order of nobility, out of respect to their being of his family; in consequence of which they all wore a purple robe with golden guards.[1]

Helena, who always preserved her authority over her son, and is said to have rarely exerted it in a bad cause, showed much wisdom and prudence by the care she took to prevent the rise of these princes, brothers of Constantine, who were of noble birth by their descent from Maximian. There were no instances of the sons of Emperors remaining in a private station, and Helena feared that though in reality they had no right to the empire, which was *elective*, they might perhaps, urged by ambition or by evil counsellors, forget their allegiance to Constantine, and disturb the tranquillity of the State. The Emperor Constantius had desired that his dominions, undivided, should devolve on her own son, and the army had sanctioned his choice. Helena had no share in this arrangement, which, however, being made when the three brothers of Constantine were still minors, she resolved to maintain, and by her prudent precautions effected her purpose. She kept them always at a distance from the court and from employments, sometimes at Toulouse, at other times at Trèves, or in some other distant city, and last of all at Corinth, where she fixed their abode.[2] Julian the Apostate, afterwards Emperor of Rome, already alluded to as having stigmatized Helena's marriage as illegal, who was himself the descendant of Theodora, designates the conduct of Helena in this instance as "the cunning artifice of a stepmother;" but Tillemont esteems it good policy,

[1] Zosimus. [2] Crevier's Hist. of the Roman Emperors.

founded on the opinion that they had no right whatever to the throne; and indeed the sequel of Constantine's family history, which will be given hereafter, proves how prudent were the precautions of Helena.

As we do not hear more of Eutropia and Theodora, it would seem not unlikely that after the death of Maximian, and the separation of these princes from the court, they quitted the palace of Constantine for the more calm retreat which their children were permitted to enjoy at a distance from the crimes and ambition which pervaded the atmosphere of the Roman State.[1]

At the time Constantine was proclaimed in Britain, Maxentius, son of Maximian, invaded Italy,[2] where he was now exercising great tyranny over the Romans in the city of the Emperors; and many of those who were exiled sought protection in Britain at the court of Constantine, whom they stirred up by their representations to march to Rome and oppose the tyrant. Among other acts of oppression of which Maxentius recently had been guilty, was that of putting to death St. Katherine, a near relative of Constantine, at Alexandria, whose sacred body, adds our authority, "was miraculously carried by angels from Alexandria to Mount Sinai."

Constantine, having assembled a powerful army,

[1] Helena, in quitting Britain, had, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, been accompanied by the three brothers of King Coel, her uncles, Llewelyn, Trehearne, and Marius. Llewelyn, at a subseqnent period, espoused a Roman lady, by whom he became father of Maxen Wledig, or the Illustrious, of whom it will be necessary to speak in another part of this work, as the husband of Helena ap Eudda.

[2] Though Constantine had been made Emperor of the West, the prætorian guards had, in a tumultuary manner, declared Maxentius Augustus at Rome.*

* Platina.

marched against Maxentius. On arriving in the neighbourhood of Rome, the Emperor encamped over against the bridge Milvius, now called Ponte Mole, two miles distant from the city. The enemy's forces were superior in point of numbers, but Constantine earnestly implored the protection of the one supreme God. After his prayer, a little before noon, as he was traversing the country with part of his army, he beheld in the sky a cross of light, with this inscription, "By this shalt thou conquer." The following night he is said to have seen our Saviour, who commanded him to make a representation of the cross which he had seen, and use it in battle. The Emperor obeyed the Divine command, and thus as early as the fourth century originated the famous banner called Labarum[1] or Standard of the Cross, which wholly displaced the ancient standard of Rome.[2]

Maxentius was defeated, and by the breaking of a bridge of boats, which by his own command had been thrown over the Tiber, was drowned in his flight.[3]

To commemorate these events, in which the heart of the Empress-Mother must have deeply shared, the senate afterwards caused a triumphal arch to be built to the honour of their pious and valiant Emperor. This

[1] Butler's Lives. The Roman custom of carrying a banner called *Labarum*, in Tertullian's time, in their armies, gave rise to the practice of banners being carried in public processions. The Labarum was worshipped both by commanders and private men. On it was painted an eagle, the ensign and the tutelary bird of the empire. From hence it is, that ensigns are called sacred in processions, and that they are saluted, and the effigies of saints of both sexes are painted thereon, because they are the patrons of parishes.—*Roma Antiqua*, p. 76.

[2] Lesly, Bishop of Ross, reports a similar story respecting Hungus, King of the Picts. He states, that the night before the battle between Athelstan, King of Northumberland, and Hungus, King of the Picts, a bright cross, in form of that whereon St. Andrew, the tutelar saint of Scotland, suffered martyrdom, appeared to Hungus; who, having gained the victory, ever after bore the figure of that cross on his banners.

[3] Butler, John Rous.

arch is yet to be seen in Rome. A statue was also erected to Constantine in one of the public places of the city, where he appeared holding a large cross in his hand, instead of a lance, and by his own order the pedestal bore the following inscription:—"By this salutary sign, the true mark of courage, I have delivered you from the yoke of tyranny, and restored the senate and people of Rome to their ancient glory."[1]

Constantine the Great was the first who displayed a cross in a shield on the imperial arms, on his helmet, and on the shields of his soldiers.[2]

Whether Helena was converted to Christianity before her son,[3] as some authors assert, or not till after the appearance of the miraculous cross which Constantine beheld, she received the rite of baptism from the hands of Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, who on this occasion was endowed with imperial dignities which were confirmed to his descendants.

A story is on record concerning the conversion of Constantine, which states, that when the Emperor was, while in the prime of age, afflicted with the leprosy, and his recovery despaired of, Helena offered up prayers for her son's restoration to health.[4] Gower, who introduces this circumstance in his "Confessio Amantis," says that every remedy resorted to having failed, the physicians of the Emperor ordered him to be bathed in the blood

[1] Butler. [2] Clavis Calendaria.

[3] St. Ambrose says that Constantine was happy in being born of such a mother as St. Helena, who found for him a divine help which filled him with courage, and placed him above the greatest perils. A truly great woman, who had it in her power to bestow on the master of the Empire something beyond all that he had already. Crevier, on the contrary, says that Helena had long been engaged in the superstitions of idolatry, and that it was by the conversion of her son that God thought proper to bring her to Christianity, which she embraced with a sincere heart and enlightened mind.

[4] Lewis's Hist. of Great Britain.

of children whose ages were under seven years. The necessary number of infant victims was collected, but Constantine's mercy prevailed; he grieved to think of the lives about to be sacrificed—

> "By cause of him alone.
> He sawe also the greate mone,
> Of that the mothers were ungladde,
> And of the wo the children made;
> Whereof that his harte tendreth
> And such pitie within engendreth,
> That him was lever for to chese
> His own bodie for to lese,
> Than see so great a mourdre wrought
> Upon the bloude, which gilteth nought."—Book ii.

The children and their mothers were remanded home, the latter praising and blessing Constantine, and praying for his restoration to health. The Emperor, on the other hand, having no hope on earth, commended himself to God alone. The same night Peter and Paul are said to have appeared to him in his sleep, and ordered him to send to Mount Celion for Sylvester and his clergy, who would cure him of his disease; "at the same time they commended his charity towards the children."

Constantine, as on a former occasion, was obedient to the order received in his vision. Sylvester obeyed the summons with joy, and seized the opportunity to preach the faith to the master of the world. Constantine requested to be baptized, and for this purpose the same vessel was employed which had been prepared for the blood of the victims. On being immersed in the holy water, "the scales of his body fell off, till nothing remained of his great malady, his body as well as his soul being cleansed and purified."

Such is the legend: we are further informed by the poet, that the Emperor sent for his mother, "Queen Eleyne;" and that, by their joint persuasions and

influence, the Roman people were admitted to the rite of baptism,[1] "of which their most holy Empress had previously set them the example."

"This emperour, which hele hath found,
Within Rome anone let founde
Two churches, which he did make
For Peter and for Paules sake;
Of whom he had a vision,
And yafe thereto possession
Of lordeshippe, and of worldes good."[2]

Platina[3] tells us that Constantine left Constantinople for the hot baths, for the recovery of his health;[4] but discredits the story of the Emperor's being afflicted with leprosy, and says, it is not mentioned by any Christian or profane author.

Whether the story was founded on fact, or not, Pope Adrian I., in after-times, asserted, in support of his supremacy, that Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor, having been converted to the truth, baptized by Pope St. Sylvester, and cured of his leprosy, had, out of gratitude, when he founded his new capital, Constantinople, freely resigned Rome, and made to the Popes the absolute and eternal donation of the Sovereignty of Italy and of the Western Empire.

In the same year that Constantine vanquished Maxentius, he is said to have also bestowed on the Bishop of Rome the Imperial Lateran Palace, A.D. 312, in which, in the following year, 313, Pope Melchiades held a synod in the apartment of the Empress Fausta, wife of Constantine. It is interesting and curious to discover the Popes in possession of this edifice as early as the fourth century; and in later times, to hear

[1] The painting of the Baptism of Constantine, by Christoforo Roncalli, adorns the Lateran Palace.
[2] Gower's Confessio Amantis, book 2. [3] And Socrates.
[4] Butler's Lives.

the famous Pope Gregory comparing Bertha, Queen of Ethelbert, the Kentish monarch, to the pious St. Helena, because, like her, she yielded up her royal abode for the service of the papal missionaries.

The baptismal font of Constantine, which was preserved in the Palace of the Lateran, having become nearly ruinous, was restored and beautified by Leo X.

"The hall of Constantine, in the Vatican, one of the last works of the immortal Raphael, was commenced under the same Pontiff (Leo X), and terminated after his death, and that of the artist, by Giulio Romano and Gian Francesio Penni. This apartment is adorned by four grand compositions, each of the series occupying one side of the chamber. The first represents the Vision of Constantine, with the miraculous appearance of the Holy Cross; the second and largest is the Victory of Constantine over Maxentius; the third, the Baptism of the Emperor; and the fourth, the Donation made by him to the Church. On the basement of this apartment are represented the figures of several of the Roman Pontiffs, who had been distinguished by superior piety; each of whom appears to be seated in a niche, and to be attended by two angels, who support his mantle, or assist in holding the book which he is employed in reading. Among them are the sainted Pontiffs, Pietro Damaso, Leo, Gregory, and Sylvester. On the base of a column, at the foot of the picture which represents the Baptism of Constantine, is inscribed, "CLEMENS VII, PONT. MAX. A LEONE X. COEPTUM CONSUMAVIT."[1]

Constantine first beheld Rome on the occasion of his triumph over Maxentius: at that time he made some stay in the capital; but he never fixed his resi

[1] Roscoe.

dence there; and from that time to the twentieth year of his reign, we always find him, by the dates of his laws, and by other historical monuments, both in war and in peace, either at Milan, at Arles, or in Illyricum, while his visits to Rome[1] appear to have been rare. Notwithstanding which, in that city remains are yet found which testify his affection for his excellent mother.

The ruins, also, of the private baths, built with great magnificence in Rome, for Helena's use, by her son, still bear the name of Thermæ S. Helenæ.[2] These baths, in the Villa Ursinia, are still among the objects of interest shown to strangers, being almost entire: they bear at the entrance the following inscription:—

"D. N. Helena Ven. Aug. Mat.
Avia. Beatiss. . . . . .
Thermæ . . . . Istria;"

"which (says Montfaucon) we have therefore set down, because otherwise delivered by others. On the left hand going out, is the Neustriæ way, and on the right the Labicane, leading to the tomb of the Empress Helen."

Several new cities were afterwards founded by Constantine, in honour of his mother, to which he gave the name of Helenopolis. One of these was situated in Palestine. Another was Drepanum, in Nicomedia, which he beautified and fortified, exempting it from all taxes: this town was favoured more particularly from the regard which the Empress herself entertained for it, from the circumstance of St. Lucian the Martyr having been interred there; she herself assisted in commemorating the spot. "This was named Helenopolis, as well as other cities, in her honour, and not

[1] Crevier. [2] Butler's Lives.

because she was born there, as some have erroneously supposed."[1] The city where Constans was slain was called the City of Helena.

The grand object of Constantine and of Helena, from the time of the victory over Maxentius, seems to have been the propagation of the Christian faith. The Empress instigated her son to piety and alms-deeds;[2] and after three hundred years had rolled away, under the domination of Emperors hostile to the creed of Jesus, its followers beheld one of British birth arise as a protector to the rights of their Church. They now first experienced peace and quietness, and to become a Christian was legal. Indemnity was made to those professors who had been injured, and the ministers of God were treated with honour.[3]

The heads of the several provinces belonging to Rome were directed to promote the Gospel; and though, like Constantius, the Emperor would not oblige them to profess Christianity, he forbade them, by their præfects, to sacrifice to idols. Even beyond the bounds of his own Empire, Constantine still sought to promote the good cause; for, in a letter to Sapor, King of Persia, he zealously pleads for the Christians of his dominions. He destroys idol temples, prohibits impious pagan rites, puts an end to the savage fights of gladiators, stands up with respectful silence to hear the sermon of Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, who furnishes him with the volumes of the Scriptures, for the use of the churches; he orders the observation of the festivals of martyrs, has prayers and reading of the Scriptures at his court, dedicates churches with great solemnity, makes Christian orations himself, one of which, of a considerable length, is preserved by the historian, his favourite bishop: directs the sacred observation of the

[1] Procopius. [2] Butler. [3] Milner, Baleus.

Lord's Day, to which he adds that of Friday also, the day of Christ's Crucifixion, and teaches the soldiers of his army to pray, by a short form made for their use.[1]

Among other improvements, Constantine abolished the barbarous punishment of crucifixion; and from the time that the sign of the cross appeared to him in the battle against Maxentius, the cross, as a figure, began to be reverenced and esteemed. Theodosius afterwards made a law that no image of the cross should be graven in stone, marble, or in earth, lest men should tread on it.[2]

Constantine also forbade the private use of divination, though he still allowed the public use of it in baths and temples; he afterwards abolished the worst branches of sorcery and magic. Finding the idolaters still addicted to their rites, he took another step, that of publicly exposing the mysteries which had hitherto been kept secret, melted down golden statues, and caused brazen ones to be drawn by ropes through the streets of Constantinople; and some of the temples, which had been scenes of horrible wickedness, he destroyed. In Egypt the famous cubit, with which the priests were wont to measure the height of the Nile, was kept in the Temple of Serapis. This, by Constantine's order, was removed to the Church of Alexandria. The pagans beheld the removal with indignation, and ventured to predict that the Nile would no longer overflow its banks. Divine Providence, however, smiled on the schemes of Constantine, and the Nile the next year overflowed the country in

[1] Milner's Church History. "Galerius, tormented with sufferings from an incurable disease, published an edict taking off the persecution from the Christians, and allowed them to rebuild their places of worship, desiring them to pray for his health. He expired a few days afterwards."

[2] Polydore Vergil.

an uncommon degree. In this gradual manner was Paganism overturned.[1]

As for Helena, Rufinus calls her faith and holy zeal *incomparable*, and says she kindled the same fire in the hearts of the Romans. One of our early writers, speaking of the piety of Helena,[2] says, "She persevered to the end of her days, with the evangelic Anne, in holy widowhood, entirely devoted to the Christian religion." There are authors who record that it was through her that persecution ceased, and peace was restored to the Church. Such an understanding of heavenly philosophy is she said to have arrived at, after a knowledge of the Gospel, that she early produced treatises—

On the Providence of God, 1 book.
On the Immortality of the Soul, 1 book.
The Rule for Right Living, 1 book. (To the ever-august lord, her son.)
Epistles to Constantine, 1 book.
Of her Revelations, 1 book.
Pious Exhortations to her Son, 1 book.
To Pope Sylvester, many epistles.
To the Abbot Antonius, many epistles.[3]
Certain Greek Poems, 1 book.

All which are stated by Ponticus to be still extant.

Hitherto, from the period of his coming into power,

[1] For many benefits conferred on the Church, Constantine was, after death, canonized by the Greeks, who keep his festival on May 21st.

[2] Baleus. Gregory the Great recommends her as an example to Bertha, Queen of Ethelbert.

[3] Anthony, the holy hermit, who is described as a man "wrapped wholly in contemplation," was by birth an Egyptian.* His manner of living was severe, his food being bread alone, and water his beverage; his single meal in the day was taken at sunset. This man did much to reform mankind in Constantine's reign, and Helena oftentimes, both by letter and messengers, recommended herself and her *sons* to his prayers.†

* John Rous. † Platina.

nothing is recorded of Constantine that takes from the excellence of his character. But whatever virtues might exist in those times, the savage nature, yet unsubdued by a continuance of the usages of the blessed faith of Christ, would occasionally break forth, and some unexpected act of cruelty or revenge appears in history, as if to contradict the good attributed to its heroes.

This was the case in regard to Constantine, who generally represented as just and merciful, yet committed acts which can scarcely be reconciled with such a reputation, and in these the influence of his mother appears to have been of no avail.

It would seem that, at the time when the son of Fausta was about ten years of age, Crispus, the son of Constantine by his first wife, Minervina, became the object, some writers say, of the love, some of the jealousy, of his mother-in-law. Be the cause what it might, Fausta, it appears, was bent on the destruction of the young prince, and made accusations against him to his father, which entirely embittered his mind.

It was at a grand festival in honour of the twentieth year of Constantine's reign, when the court was at Nicomedia, that in the midst of enjoyment, and unsuspecting of evil, Crispus and several of his friends were arrested, carried away to judgment, and after a brief examination by persons already instructed to find them guilty, they were condemned, some to death, others to banishment, which was to end in the same punishment. Crispus was sent to Pola, in Istria, where he was soon after put to death.[1]

The vengeance of Fausta was now satisfied, and the stern justice of Constantine executed; but Helena's affliction knew no bounds at so severe and unlooked-for

[1] Gibbon.

an act, and she felt convinced, not only that the prince was innocent of the intention to conspire against his father, of which he was publicly accused, but that he had secret enemies, who ought to be brought to light, and receive the reward of their crime.

In her endeavours to discover these, revelations of a character for which she was not prepared, were made, by which Constantine became aware of the infidelity of the Empress Fausta herself, to whose representations he had yielded, and had sacrificed his son. Rage and jealousy now took possession of his mind, and without waiting for more proofs of the frailty of his wife, he determined that her life should pay the forfeit of her treachery.

It is recorded that Fausta met her death in the bath, in which she was suffocated by the steam, "it having been heated to an extraordinary degree."[1]

Helena heard of this second act of retribution with feelings of deep regret and sorrow, and is said to have, in her character of his mother, reproved the Emperor with great severity for his cruelty in both instances: and this is recorded to have been the sole occasion on which a difference ever existed between her and her son. The accusations and the vengeance were both common to the times, and frightful as the facts are, the loss of human life did not affect the world as it does in more civilized days; otherwise it is difficult to find excuses for Constantine, who is accused by some authors of more than one act of cruelty irreconcileable with his boasted clemency. Considering his profession of the new faith, and his opposition to the old, he had doubtless sufficient enemies ready to blacken his character, whenever there was a possibility of misrepresenting the truth. This may also account for

[1] Gibbon.

the accusations which have been made against Helena herself, of having been the accuser of Fausta, and the instigator of her son's vengeance against his wife.

The death of Licinius is another stain cast on the fame of Constantine, who, having condemned him as an accomplice in the designs of Crispus, affected to listen to the prayers of his agonised sister, and appeared to consent to his banishment to Thessolonica; but he was, soon after his arrival there, murdered by the imperial order.

Helena, after the catastrophe of their mother's death, took upon herself the education of the children of Fausta.

About A.D. 325 happened one of the most interesting events in Church history—the Council of Nice. It is not certain that Helena was present on this remarkable occasion; but, as her son presided at the assembly, it is very likely that she did so likewise, for she generally not only accompanied him wherever he went, but sat in council, and aided him with her wisdom and experience.

Helena is thus described, when, at the advanced age of eighty, she undertook an expedition surprising at her years: "Her life was constantly happy, at least after the elevation of her son to the throne of the Cæsars. She saw that only son reunite under his power the whole extent of the Roman dominion, and three grandsons seemed to promise her that the Empire would be perpetuated in her posterity. Add to this, perfect health, and an unimpaired vigour of mind, preserved even in her old age. So many prosperities were not to her, as they too often prove, a means of seduction, but, on the contrary, an inexhaustible fund *of grateful acknowledgment and piety towards God.*"[1]

[1] Crevier.

The great enterprise for which, more than any other action in her life, Helena has been celebrated, was a journey into the East, for the express purpose of discovering the true cross on which our Saviour had suffered. This grand undertaking was made at the distance of more than three hundred years from the Christian era, and attests the exalted piety of the Empress. Some say she desired to adorn the churches and oratories in those sacred spots, noticed in the history of our blessed Lord, and to relieve the poor[1] of those parts; others, that visions, admonitions in sleep, or divine warnings, had led to the design which drew Helena to the Holy Land; and St. Paulinus declares no worldly motive could have directed her steps; it was the pious one alone of discovering the true cross. A letter from Constantine was dispatched to Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, ordering him to make search for the sacred relic on Mount Golgotha of Calvary. Tradition had pointed out the spot where it was to be found, and it is said that Helena had been favoured with an especial revelation to aid her search.

Accordingly, the aged Empress set forth, attended by an imperial retinue, and at the head of a large army, taken for that purpose out of Britain;[2] whence some have derived her surname of "Lueddog," Elen Lueddog signifying "Elen with the *great army.*"

The desire of Helena to admit her own countrymen to a share in this great and glorious enterprise is highly interesting; for it shows that in her honoured position of Roman Empress she still remembered that she was Queen of the Britons. The Emperor himself accompanied her as far as Byzantium.

On her arrival at Jerusalem, Helena is said to have convened a large assembly of Jews, of whom she

[1] Rufinus, John Baleus. [2] Lewis's Hist. of Great Britain.

requested information concerning the spot of which she was in search. They refused to point it out; upon which Helena threatened to put them to death.[1] On hearing this, they reluctantly confessed that Judas —an ominous name—one of their number, could give the necessary information. This man, however, who was really acquainted with the place, was as resolute as his brethren; and it was not till after he had passed several days without food in a dry cistern or pit, where he had been placed by order of Helena, that hunger conquered his resolution, and he made known the secret, by leading the impatient Empress to the spot.[2] When arrived there, the search was by no means easy. The Emperor Adrian, who had delighted in the profanation of those sacred places, had, about 200 years before, buried under great heaps of earth the place where the holy sepulchre existed, not far distant from the spot of the crucifixion, and had built upon a platform over the place, which was paved with stone, a temple to Venus, while above the sepulchre he had raised a statue of Jupiter.

It was necessary to remove the whole of this edifice, and afterwards to clear away the mass of stones on which it rested, as a preliminary step to the necessary discovery; this done, they had to dig very deep to discover the former surface. No difficulties could, however, deter Helena from accomplishing her pious object. After a vast quantity of earth had been removed, and all the rubbish of the buildings they had demolished, the sacred grot was discovered wherein the Lord's body had rested,[3] and whence it had arisen in a glorified state.

After they had dug a little deeper still, they dis-

[1] Caxton says by *fire*. [2] Eusebius, Caxton. [3] Caxton.

covered three crosses; and here a new and unexpected difficulty arose—for they could not determine which of these crosses was the one that had borne the Saviour of Man. The superscription was indeed found, but it was not attached to any one of them. Judas could not tell the Queen which was the true cross, and Macarius suggested that a miraculous proof should be demanded of God concerning its identity. The Empress, the bishop, and others, therefore, went to the house of a lady of quality, who was very ill, in the city. On arriving there, the Empress having herself made a prayer aloud,[1] the bishop applied the crosses, and the sick person was restored instantly at the touch of the true cross. Many historians relate this as a fact; and add that, by touching it, a dead person also was restored to life. According to Caxton, Judas had laid the three crosses in the middle of the city, and while there awaiting some demonstration from God, at about noon a young man's body was carried forth to burial. Judas detained the bier, and laid on it first one of the three crosses, then a second, and after that the third, when the dead was restored to life. Sozomen relates this incident, as he tells us, from report only; and Mr. Butler says it deserves little credit. Some, indeed, consider the whole story of the Inventio Crucis, or Finding of the Cross by Helena, as a mere fiction; and Salmasius, in his "Treatise de Cruce," p. 296, endeavours to prove it such, on account of the supposed inscription; "for where was the necessity of a miracle for distinguishing the cross on which our Saviour suffered, from those of the malefactors, if the above-mentioned inscription was found near it; as it would plainly appear, from the hole and nails, which of the crosses it had been affixed to,

[1] This prayer is recorded by Rufinus, Hist. lib. x, cap. 8.

though even the two other malefactors, as is probable, had their inscriptions."[1] Eusebius, however, mentions indirectly the discovery of the cross, in the letter of Constantine addressed to Macarius about building the church, and describes the two magnificent churches which Helena built, the one on Calvary, the other on Mount Olivet;[2] it is, therefore, no refutation of these historians, though perhaps some embellishment may have been added to the main facts.[3]

The Empress, who had presided in person over the whole work, was overwhelmed with joy at finding herself in possession of such a treasure; she cut the sacred cross into two pieces, the largest of which was enclosed in a rich silver shrine, and placed under the care of Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem; it was afterwards annually exposed to the adoration of the people, sometimes oftener, in proportion to the number of pilgrims who resorted thither to worship it. The second portion of the cross was sent as a present of inestimable value

[1] Keysler's Travels. [2] Butler.

[3] Polydore Vergil, who relates the fact of Helena's finding the three crosses, says, "it was easy to perceive Christ's cross by the title which then did remain, albeit sore wasted and corrupted with antiquity."

Judas is said to have possessed a family memorial of 326 years' standing, naming the place which Helena desired to discover, which document he presented to the Empress, and thus the cross was found. Subsequently Judas, who was a Hebrew, received the baptismal rite, and the name of Queriacus was bestowed on him by Helena; he lived to become a bishop, and suffered martyrdom. The Romans appointed a festival in his honour on the 3rd of May, which was subsequently called Holy Cross Day.

Platina tells us the cross was discovered by Helena on the 3rd of May, during the Pontificate of Eusebius, but the calendar appended to Cooper's account of the most important Public Records of Great Britain (vol. ii., p. 489), fixes the date on the 3rd of May, A.D. 326, in the twenty-first year of Constantine's reign, the thirteenth of the Pontificate of Sylvester, and the first after the Council of Nice. —Butler, vol. v., p. 564.

to Constantine, who was at Constantinople, and there; at certain periods, it was uncovered and exposed to the adoration of the public with much solemnity. Fragments, as is well known, of this cross have been dispersed all over Christendom.

About three hundred and fifty years after the discovery of the cross, an Anglo-Saxon nun wrote the description of a journey of pilgrimage made by two of her countrymen[1] in the eighth century, who travelled to the Holy Land through Asia Minor. After tracing their progress, the writer, who was of the monastery of Heidenheim, says: "And then they came to Jerusalem, by that place where the Holy Cross of our Lord was found. There is now a church in this place, called the Place of Calvary; but St. Helen, when she discovered it, enclosed it within the boundaries of Jerusalem; and there stand three wooden crosses, in front of the east court of the church, near the wall. These are not within the church, but withoutside, under a covering; and there is that garden, near where the sepulchre of our Lord was. This sepulchre was cut in the rock, and that rock stands upon the ground; it is four-square within, and narrow towards the top; and the cross of that sepulchre stands now upon the top; and there beside is built an admirable house; and on the east side, in that rock, is the door of the sepulchre, by which men enter into it to pray; and there is the bed where the body of the Lord lay; and there stand about the bed fifteen golden basins of oil, burning day and night; that bed is on the northern side, within the sepulchre, and is on the right hand of the man as he goes in to pray there. And there, before the door of the sepul-

[1] St. Willebald and St. Wunebald. See Miss Lawrance's interesting work, History of Woman in England.

chre, lieth a great stone, like to that which the angel rolled away."

Such is one of the earliest accounts of the sacred edifice which was erected over the spot of our Lord's Sepulchre,[1] where part of the cross found by St. Helena was deposited. The splendour is said to have rivalled that of Heliogabalus's Temple of the Sun, "its walls being lined with precious marbles, its roof covered with beaten gold, while in the shower of light which fell upon its dome, Helena affected to image and perpetuate the angelic glory to which the fane was dedicated."[2]

A modern writer[3] describes the building in these terms: "The form of the body of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is circular, over which is a heavy cupola. In the body of the church are entrances to the three chapels of the Greeks, Armenians, and Latins, and to the cells of the monks, who are kept there for the service of the church. The chapels are fitted up in the style of the sect to which they belong; the Greeks and Armenians with pictures, the Latins with images. In the centre rises an oblong building of wood, of twenty feet in length by ten in breadth, in which is a cupola, open at top. One half of this contains the Sepulchre of our Saviour, the other is fitted up for the chapel of the Copts. A small space enclosed by low railings surrounds the entrance to the Sepulchre. I confess I had been prepared to see something like a tomb, and was rather disappointed, on entering, to find myself in a mean chapel, where the altar, of plain white marble, occupied a space of six feet in length, two in breadth, and in depth about two feet and a half,

[1] Milner's Hist. of the Church of Christ.
[2] Lady Morgan.
[3] Light's Travels in Egypt, Nubia, the Holy Land, and Cyprus.

leaving only room in front fit to kneel. It covers, according to the tradition of the place, the tomb of our Saviour, of whom a miserable picture is hung on the tapestry over the altar; this is lighted by forty-five silver lamps, suspended in six rows from the cupola. I followed the example of my guide in kissing the altar, kneeling and bowing my head over it.

"From the Sepulchre, I was led to a flat stone of six feet in length, and three in breadth, forming part of the pavement of the body of the church where our Saviour's body was anointed after it was taken from the cross; near which were the tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin, two of the sovereigns of Jerusalem during the Crusades. They are now enclosed, and concealed from view within the wall, their existence and appearance not being interesting to the Armenians, who new modelled the church.

"The attempt to bring everything connected with the crucifixion of our Saviour under the same roof, surprised me. In one part of the church is an elevated piece of rock, enclosed in a sort of chapel, in which the crucifixion took place; three small square pieces of marble, in the centre of which is a pole, mark the spot where the crosses of our Saviour and the malefactors were fixed; and in another, close to this, is a chapel, dedicated to the place where the ceremony of nailing to the cross was performed; underneath is an excavation, where St. Helena found the cross; and a little further off is the tomb of Nicodemus the Jew, who is mentioned in St. John, chapter iii; but by what authority he is buried here I do not know. To complete the show, a fragment of a granite column, about two feet high, said to be taken from the palace of Pontius Pilate, and described as the pillar to which our Saviour was attached when he was scourged, is placed in another chapel. But I will not tire the reader by dwelling longer on the relics of this church, which are made the objects of

contention between the different sects, and are by turns possessed, as each has money to purchase the right to them from the Turkish chiefs, who of course are anxious that such contests should occur."

Mr. Light, seeing the anxiety to crowd all the relics of the Saviour under one roof, the Sepulchre in particular being so near the place of crucifixion, doubts whether it was the actual burying-place of our Lord, and thinks that the early Christians, from their zeal, neglected to examine among the tombs further from the city for the real Sepulchre. He says:—"In the Valley of Jehosophat there are caverns which have evidently been tombs, many of them with a stone portal, and bear marks of great antiquity. The text in Scripture says, the stone was rolled away, which certainly applies more to a vertical than a horizontal position, the supposed situation of the present tomb, and is contrary to the custom prevalent of burying the dead in tombs excavated in the sides of rocks, of which memorials are to be found in all parts of the East. As I made these observations before I read Dr. Clarke's account of Jerusalem, I was much gratified in finding his opinion coincide with mine."

The same author goes on to observe:—"Within the limits of the Aga's seraglio or palace are said to be the place of confinement and judgment-hall of our Saviour, the spot where he was scourged, and that in which the cross was kept before it was used for the crucifixion, and where it was left by the Empress Helena after she found it on Mount Calvary."

Helena, likewise, was desirous to evince her piety by monuments, raised in the several other places rendered sacred by our Lord's sufferings. She destroyed at Bethlehem the Temple of Adonis, by which Adrian had, about a hundred years before, profaned the place where Christ was born, and raised instead, a church to

the incarnate Son of God. She built another upon the Mount of Olives, on the spot where our Saviour ended his abode on earth by his glorious ascension. In both these works she was assisted by the liberality of her son, but she had the first share in the design and execution of them.[1]

The lamented author of the "Crescent and the Cross"[2] thus describes his visit to the Church of St. Helena, at Bethlehem :—"Entering by a very low door and long passage, almost upon hands and knees, I stood up under the noble dome of the Church of St. Helena. The roof, constructed of cedar-wood from Lebanon, is supported by forty huge marble pillars, showing dimly the faded images of painted saints. The whole building is silent, dirty, and neglected-looking, but of noble proportions. From its court are parted off the different chapels

[1] Both these edifices are described by the early Saxon writer of the Life of St. Willebald, in the eighth century, as having been seen by that bishop, who, when he visited the Mount of Olives, "came to the church on that mount from which our Lord ascended into heaven. And in the midst of the church stands a plate of brass beautifully wrought, and it is square. This is in the midst of the church, on the place where our Lord ascended into heaven; and in the middle court is a quadrangle, and there are little glass lamps, and round about these lamps is glass to enclose them. And this is why they are enclosed, that they may keep alight both in rain and sunshine. This church is, moreover, very broad, and without a roof, and there stand two pillars just withinside the church, against the northern and the southern walls. These are in remembrance of the two men who said, 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?' And that man who can pass between the wall and the columns, they say he is free from his sins.

"Then he went to the place where the angels appeared to the shepherds, and then to Bethlehem, where our Lord was born. This place was formerly a cave, and now it is a house, cut four-square in the rock, and the earth is dug away round about, and a church is now built over it. And on the place where the Lord was born now stands an altar, and another smaller altar is there, and when they celebrate mass in the cave, they take that smaller altar and carry it within. This church, which stands above, is built in the form of a cross, and it is a glorious building."

[2] Eliot Warburton.

belonging to the rival sects. The Armenian is the handsomest and wealthiest of these, as its friars are by far the most respectable.

"The Chapel of the Nativity is a subterranean grotto, into which you descend in darkness, that gives way to the softened light of many silver lamps suspended from the roof. Notwithstanding the improbability of this being the actual place of the Nativity, one cannot descend with indifference into the inclosure, which has led so many millions of pilgrims, in rags or armour, during 1800 years, from their distant homes. It is, however, impossible to recognise anything like a reality in the mass of marble, brass, and silken tawdry ornaments; and one leaves this most celebrated spot in the world with feelings of disappointment."

Mr. Turner is still more minute; these are his words: "I descended a staircase and entered a grotto, said to be the site of the stable in which our Saviour was born; it lies east south-east, and west north-west, and is thirty-seven feet six inches long, and fourteen broad. At the easterly end, on the supposed site of the birth, is built an altar, six feet three inches long, and fifty-eight feet six inches deep, formerly belonging (as indeed did the whole church) to the Catholics, but now usurped by the Greeks, with whom the Armenians have lately bought a share. This altar, lying north north-east, and south south-west, is above, adorned with mosaic, laid by Helena, but now ruined, and with Greek pictures of saints, &c., and lighted with fourteen silver lamps, belonging to its present possessors. The grotto, *i.e.*, the whole, is lighted by twenty-six silver and silver-gilt lamps, the property of the Catholics. To the west-south-west of the site of the birth, fourteen feet distant (in which are included three steps, cut from the naked rock), is another

altar (lying north by east and south by west, and contained in an interior grotto), the site, it is said, of the manger in which our Saviour was laid: this altar is fifty inches long, and thirty-five and a half deep. To the east south-east of the manger, five feet six inches distant, is another altar, supposed to be on the spot where stood the Magi, when they offered their gifts to Jesus. Both these are hung with appropriate pictures; and the one on the site of the manger is lighted by five silver lamps. This interior grotto measured seven feet ten inches, by eight feet nine inches, and is embellished by four small columns standing near the supposed site of the manger, one of verd antique, one of pink, and two of white marble; these were also placed by St. Helena. At the westerly end of the church is a door leading to a large natural cave, in which is shown, first, from the door to the right, an altar, covering, it is said, the spot where Joseph retired to pray, after the delivery of the Virgin; second, to the right, an altar, where are thought to have been buried the Innocents murdered by command of Herod; under it is a large hollow; third, turning into a passage on the left, an altar upon the sepulchre of St. Eusebius; fourth, in the same passage, an altar upon the sepulchre of Santa Paola and her daughter; opposite to which, fifth, an altar on the sepulchre of St. Jerome; and sixth, turning to the right, a chamber, said to have been the tomb where St. Jerome taught. The only thing belonging to the Greeks and Armenians here below, is the altar, on the site of the birth; under this is a small hole, which they have embellished with a silver plate, for the pilgrims to kiss."[1]

It appears from St. Ambrose, that Helena was, out of contempt, called Stabularia by the Jews and Pagans,

[1] Turner's Tour in the Levant.

not as Baronius thinks, because Constantius lodged at the house of her father *in Britain*, but because she herself founded this church at Bethlehem where the stable stood in which Christ was born, and which the enemies of the Christian name turned into ridicule. St. Ambrose writes thus of her: "They say she was first a stabularia, or one who entertained strangers, and so became known to Constantius, who afterwards arrived at the Empire. A good stabularia, who sought so diligently the crib of the Lord; who chose to be reputed as dung, that she might gain Christ!" This commentary might also have referred to another grand work of Helena, which was a kitchen for the support of the indigent and hungry poor at Jerusalem.

In this manner Helena directed the State revenues which her son had placed in her hands to the purposes of religion and benevolence. Paulinus, Epist. XI. ad Severum, reproaches the Empress-Mother with abusing the exchequer; but Fuller,[1] who refers to this charge against Helena, thinks that the word "abuti" should be rendered, "a full and free use of those treasures" her son had employed her to distribute.

Saint Paulinus[2] writes of the discovery of the cross through the zeal of the Empress Helena, and lavishes praises on the faith of Constantine. The epistle which he addressed on this subject to Sulpicius Severus is edifying, for it gives a just idea of the mother's piety, and the religion of the young prince, her son:—

"I am persuaded that it is not out of season that I inform you how the cross has been found, and recognised, to edify your faith by the history of an event which is too important for one to be ignorant of. It is easy to see, that he who knows not the detail,

[1] Worthies of England, Vol. i., p. 500, edit. 1840.
[2] Bishop of Nola.

would with difficulty understand how this cross, which has been discovered by revelation, was the true one, on which the Lord willingly expired for us; but it cannot be doubted that if it had fallen into the hands of the Jews, who are always watching to weaken the faith of Jesus Christ, they would have torn it to pieces, and reduced it to ashes. For those who had sealed the Sepulchre, would not have failed to destroy the remembrance of it, and they would not have suffered the preservation of the cross to afford an excuse for worshipping Him whose resurrection they would not acknowledge, though attested by the opening of the tomb, and the uselessness of the seals they had placed upon it to hinder the rising from the dead which they apprehended. It is, therefore, in vain that we demand why the cross remained buried in the earth, since, if it had not been so, above all during the time of the persecutions, which have succeeded to the hatred of the Jews, and almost surpassed their cruelty, it is evident that all the remains would have been entirely destroyed; for one may easily imagine with what fury those persons would have destroyed the cross, who have expended their violence on the place where it had been deposited. The Emperor Adrian thought that by despoiling this sacred spot, he would succeed in undermining and extirpating the faith of the Christians: with this view he decorated a statue of Jupiter in the place where Christ died, and Bethlehem was in like manner profaned by the impure Temple of Adonis. He hoped, so to speak, to pluck up the Church by the root, and to shake it from the foundation, if idols became adored on the spot where Jesus Christ was born to suffer, suffered to rise again, rose again to reign, and was judged by the world, that in his turn he might judge the world. Alas! it has pleased the all-powerful

God to expose himself to these outrages, and even so permit profanation of sacrilegious men in the spot where he was crucified for the salvation of the human race. Over the cross, which had shaken all nature with earthquakes, by the eclipse of the sun, and by the dead rising from their graves, the idol of the Devil was raised; his altar smoked with the funeral pile of the beasts which were sacrificed to him; the name of God was conveyed to dead images, while He who is the living God, and the resurrection of the dead, was loaded with opprobrium, and blasphemed as a man who was dead, and dead by the shameful punishment of the cross. In Bethlehem, where two animals had recognised their master, and the manger of their Lord, men, disowning their Saviour and their God, have paid a superstitious worship to the infamous love of mortals, and to dead bodies. That place in which wise men from the distant climate of Chaldea had adored the Eternal King, whose cradle had been revealed to them by a new star, and had offered their presents, had the Romans rendered sacred to impure and barbarous passions. In that spot where, during the night, lighted by the star, the shepherds, accompanied by a multitude of angels, and transported by a celestial joy, repaired to render homage to the new-born Saviour, impure females, amidst effeminate men, have wept for the death of Adonis, and the grief of Venus. Alas! what piety may be able to expiate such prodigious impiety! In the place where the sacred tears of the Saviour's infancy had been heard, shameful ceremonies retain the cries of those who utter the lamentable complaints of Venus.

"This shame to the age lasted till the time of Constantine, which touches our own. This prince merited to be the model and chief of Christian princes, by his

own faith and that of his mother Helena, who, by Divine inspiration, when this circumstance was made known to her, sighed for the happiness of beholding Jerusalem; and being proclaimed August with her son, besought him to give her permission to visit the places made holy by the traces of our Lord, and by the mysteries which He had wrought for us. She desired by the destruction of temples and sacrilegious idols, to purge these holy places from the contagion of impiety, and to restore them to their original holiness; for it was necessary that the Church should resume its rights, and recover its first lustre in that place where it had received its birth. The Emperor did not hesitate to consent to all that she wished, and his august mother devoted the treasures with which she had been entrusted by him, in lavishing on the pious works which she projected every richness that could be withdrawn thence. It was with all the grandeur and magnificence which depended on herself, and which religion required, that she adorned noble churches in every place where her Divine Redeemer had accomplished the healing mysteries of mercy.

"Helena desired, in these magnificent works, to pay to Christ the homage of an Empress; but she did not, at the same time, omit to perform those works of mercy and goodness, which are more pleasing in the eyes of God than any temples wrought with hands. It was her delight to relieve the poor, the orphans, and widows, by her charity; and as she travelled from place to place through the Holy Land, and more intimately surveyed the spots on which she desired to erect monuments to mark the glory of the Lord, and her own pious zeal in His service, she left in the hearts of all, abundant testimonies to her own vital religion. Helena especially honoured those virgins who were

consecrated to God; and having one day assembled all who resided at Jerusalem, she gave them an entertainment, at which she waited on them herself."

Suidas, who notices this humility of mind and Christian modesty in the Empress of the Roman world, towards women of the monastic order, says: "She often assembled, and seated, and ministered to them with her own hands, setting before them the victuals, and handing the cups, and pouring water over their hands, so performing the part and office of a maid-servant."

"She loved simplicity; and in the common prayers of the faithful, she mixed with the other women, without taking any particular or distinguished place. She visited the principal churches of the East, and left, wherever she went, proofs of her Christian and religious liberality; nor did she pass by the chapels of the meanest towns, where her delicate sense of humility led her to appear amongst the women at prayer in a most humble garment. She was able to indulge her pious charity in these respects, because the Emperor, her son, confiding in her prudence, gave her leave to draw upon the imperial treasury for whatever sums she pleased."[1] Whilst, therefore, "Helena travelled all over the East with royal pomp and magnificence, she heaped all kinds of favours both on cities and private persons, particularly on soldiers, the poor, the naked, and those who were condemned to the mines, distributing money, garments, &c., and freeing many from oppression, chains, and banishment."[2] By these and a thousand other actions, Helena proved herself the "common mother of the indigent and distressed."[3] "She herself built more churches than any woman before her time or since,[4] to say nothing of those nu-

[1] Crevier.
[2] Butler's Lives.
[3] St. Gregory the Great.
[4] Green's Worcester.

merous edifices of another kind, suggested by her benevolence."

Of this latter class was the kitchen founded at Jerusalem by the Empress, thus described by Mr. Turner: "We visited the kitchen of St. Helena, which is a large edifice, well built of yellowish marble, and having its two doors adorned after the Gothic fashion. It is still used by the Turks for the purpose for which it was originally instituted, being a kitchen endowed by the Sultan for the benefit of the poor, and of Turkish travellers. The Turks have divided it into several apartments, of which some are ovens, some stables; and above they have built a mosque and a bath."

The Church of the Ascension, which stands on the loftiest of the three summits of the Mount of Olives, in the centre of the village of Mount Olivet, on the very spot whence our Saviour is thought to have ascended to heaven, was built, it is said, by St. Helena, and, says Warburton, "from the roof may be obtained the most interesting, if not the most striking, view in the world." The holy spot whereon our Lord is supposed to have stood, was enclosed by the Empress with an octagonal building, roofed by a round dome. "On each side of this building, except where is the door, are two small columns (fourteen in all) of coarse marble, with highly ornamented capitals. The circle of the inside was sixteen feet two inches round, and the dome about thirty-five feet high from the ground. Within is a stone, thirty-one inches by twenty-one, said to have been the last earthly substance that Jesus trod on. This stone contained an impression, which, says tradition, is the print of Jesus' foot. A higher authority,[1] however, says, our Saviour ascended from Bethany. Near the stone is a recess (to make which the symmetry of the

[1] Luke, chap. xxiv.

building is spoiled, and a parcel of stones are heaped up to cover it on the outside) for the Turks and Arabs to pray in. All the pilgrims kiss the stone very devoutly. Of the court in which the building stands, each side is about one hundred feet, but the shape is irregular. Here the Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, and Copts, have each an altar (the Armenians have two) of stones, rudely piled,[1] of the Mosque of Omar. In the kitchen, which has a small dome, supported by four square clumsy columns, are some of the original caldrons of Helena, of which, one of the largest that I measured, was fifty inches round, and thirty inches deep. A mituctee, or superintendent, is sometimes sent from Constantinople, to honour a distinguished visitor here: she has a residence in the kitchen, and takes care that the guest be well provided: in this case the poor are neglected, as the fund is eaten up by the numerous attendants that always accompany a distinguished Turk."[2]

It must be interesting to the generous friends of the poor and needy, who in our own days have fed the hungry and clothed the naked, in similar institutions, to revert to the primary institution founded on this principle in a remote age in that Holy City which, in religious interest, exceeds every other in the earth. Nor was this the only other embellishment added by Helena to the churches she had already founded; for, about one hundred paces south-east of the Holy Sepulchre stands the convent of St. Peter, also the work of the Empress. It is now in the possession of the Turks, who have converted it into a tanner's yard and stables;

[1] The village itself stands on the summit of a mountain, and commands a complete view of Jerusalem, from which it is about twenty minutes' distance.—Turner.

[2] Turner's Tour.

several broken pieces of columns are attached to the walls. Scarcely a spot celebrated in Scripture passed unregarded by the observant and pious Helena: churches arose in all directions, convents adorned the desolate places dedicated to the service of Christ: Nazareth, Bethlehem, Arimathea, testify the zeal of the Empress in her holy undertaking. The finest convent in the Holy Land, that at Nazareth, was erected by her orders, and is thus described: "The church of this convent is very large and handsome: there is a grotto under it, to which visitors descend by a handsome marble staircase: it was there, they say, that the angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin. The natural ceiling of the grotto is left; but a very handsome altar of sculptured marble is built in it; and there are still seen two columns of granite, placed, it is said, by Helena, to mark the spot; of one of which the lower part is broken off, so that it is upheld by, and hangs from, the stone roof, which is here looked on as miraculous. Out of the grotto, a short passage leads into a small cave, said to have been the kitchen of the Virgin."[1]

Of the Convent of St. Catherine, at Bethlehem, Dr. Wittman writes:—"As we approached the convent, in which we were received with great hospitality, we passed beneath the ruins of an ancient gateway, and afterwards entered a lofty building, erected by St. Helena, anciently styled the Temple, but now the Convent of St. Catherine. It is ornamented with at least fifty lofty and beautiful columns of marble, of the Corinthian order, and has on its walls the remains of several fine paintings in fresco of Scriptural subjects, representing the apostles, patriarchs, &c. The beauty and symmetry of the Temple have been in some measure destroyed, by a portion of it, which they have

[1] Turner's Tour.

converted into a chapel, having been divided off by the Greeks, who received permission from the Turks to do so, on their consenting to pay an annual contribution."

"Ramla," says the same traveller, "the ancient Arimathea, was the seat of government in the theocratic days of Israel; here Samuel judged the people, and here the elders of the Hebrews assembled to demand a king to rule over them." Here St. Helena, having gathered the bones of the martyrs out of the marshes, and placed them in coffins, built over them a church called the Church of the Holy Martyrs. Light, who visited the subterraneous Church of the Forty Martyrs, says, "the ruin may be dated from the time of the Crusades. Close to this there is a large reservoir, which is ascribed to St. Helena, the roof being supported by arches and pillars of the Gothic or Saracenic architecture, the length being not less than one hundred feet, and the breadth forty."

Among other foundations ascribed to Helena, are the Convent of St. Tecla, in the island of Cyprus, and the Convent of Santa Croce, built on the summit of the ancient Mount Olympus: the latter is said to have been small, but built with great solidity.[1]

When the idea of searching for the cross first inspired the Empress, she is said to have exclaimed, "I behold Calvary, I behold the field of battle — but where are the spoils and the trophies? I seek the

[1] Mr. Turner says: "Under it are subterraneous chambers, of which three have been opened, and found to contain rich priestly habits; of these the Turks took possession; there remains a fourth unopened, of which the priests conceal their knowledge till they shall find an opportunity of opening it unknown to their tyrants. The door of the convent is guarded by a portcullis; the church is small and mean. I found it full of about one hundred and fifty Greek peasants, who were bowing and praying to a cloth, on which was embroidered a cross."

standard of salvation without its being displayed to my view! I am elevated on a throne, and the cross of my Saviour lies buried under a dunghill! I see myself, amidst a superb court, and the triumph of the Son of God is buried in ruins! How can I believe that I have been redeemed, if I do not behold the victory of my Redeemer?"[1] Her glorious enterprise was indeed achieved, and when the precious relic of the Divine nature upon earth was presented to her enraptured view, she worshipped, not indeed the senseless wood, but Him who had suffered upon it. Yet this very circumstance led to a result on which the pious Empress had not counted —no other than the worship of relics—a superstitious observance which has continued ever since to prevail wherever the Romish faith has prevailed. The first originator, then, of the material worship which so essentially characterises the Roman Catholic, in contradistinction to the real Christian or Protestant faith, was the unconscious mother of Constantine. Before her time, no cross was ever venerated by the followers of our Lord, nor were material objects combined with the principles of the Christian faith. The apostles, the primitive fathers of the Church, the martyrs of Dioclesian, had alone the true God before their eyes; but now a new object of interest arose, and a new tradition attached importance, solemnity, and honour, to places and things; to the former, as the abodes of our Lord on earth, to the latter as relics rendered sacred by His touch.

The portion of the cross, forwarded to Rome, was divided into portions, each of which was destined to form the foundation for some new edifice, dedicated to Christianity. Over these sacred relics was built, amongst others, the magnificent edifice of St. Peter at Rome.

[1] Ambrose, Theodoret.

The possession of a portion of the Holy Cross was esteemed in itself sufficient to render any spot sacred and hallowed. Spires and domes arose in countless numbers to testify the fact. Other relics besides were found to be peculiarly sacred; the garments of the apostles, the bones of departed saints, began to acquire value in the Christian mind. The belief which could not attain by faith to a spiritual knowledge of the facts of the redemption, was forward in recognising and receiving objects known and attested by their connexion with the Divinity and His followers.[1]

To the great influence of Helena was also to be attributed the removal by Constantine of the court from Rome to Byzantium, where the Emperor founded for himself a new capital, which, from his own name, derived that of Constantinopolis, or "the city of Constantine." The more immediate vicinity of this city to the localities which the Empress-Mother desired to adorn with edifices for Christian worship, was the main object in her view, and the Emperor seconded the design, under the impression that they might, by fixing their residence there, more easily direct the persons employed to carry out their mutual enterprise. In the end, however, the removal of the court to so distant a spot produced the ruin of the Roman Empire, by diverting the strength of the heart of the government to so remote a portion. It is singular enough that the renowned city of Constantinople, first chiefly re-edified

[1] An Order of the Cross (or Croisade), consisting of ladies only, was instituted in 1668 by the Empress Eleanora de Gonzagua, a namesake of the mother of Constantine, and wife of the Emperor Leopold, on the occasion of the miraculous recovery of a little golden cross, wherein were inclosed two pieces of the true cross, out of the ashes of part of the palace: though the fire had burnt the case wherein it was enclosed, and melted the crystal, the wood had remained untouched by the devouring element!—Ency. Brit.

and ennobled by Constantine, son of Helena, should at last have been lost, and bereft of all Christian religion, by an Emperor called Constantine, whose mother also bore the name of Helena, A.D. 1460.[1]

The mother of Constantine the Great visited Constantinople the same year that the cross was discovered, A.D. 326. In that new capital of the world the Empress "founded temples exceeding in splendour, if not in beauty, the antique monuments of pagan worship, and strangely contrasting with the chill catacombs and subterraneous crypts of the early congregations of Christians. The first church raised by Constantine, under the influence of Helena, was dedicated to the Divine Wisdom, clothed in a female form, under the invocation of St. Sophia. Even the foundation of the Imperial City itself was ascribed to the inspiration of the Virgin Mary, who was chosen its tutelary guardian."[2]

Among other decorations of the Forum itself, there were, according to Suidas, "two columns of Helena and Constantine, with a cross between them, having the inscription 'Unus Sanctus,' 'there is One Holy.'"[3]

The fame of Christianity spread far and wide, amidst all the external honours paid to the faith; and as Helena, with her splendid train of Roman and British followers, progressed through the East from place to place, great multitudes of converts, amongst whom were illustrious Indians, Iberians and Armenians, and many others of a meaner sort, received the baptismal rite, and swelled the imperial train.[3]

[1] Stowe. "In 1472, on the 27th of May, when Mahomet II., Prince of the Turks, took Constantinople, he beheaded the Christian Emperor, Constantine, and, putting his head on the top of a lance, caused it to be borne with derision through the Turkish camp. At the taking of the city there was also a horrible tempest of thunder and lightning, which buried about eight hundred houses."

[2] Lady Morgan. [3] Suidas.

During the period that Constantinople was re-edified, Constantine resided at Nicomedia, surnamed "The Beautiful," the capital city of Bithynia, which, for greatness and magnificence, has been compared to Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria.[1] Thither Helena repaired, to join her son, as soon as she had accomplished her designs in the East, carrying with her the precious testimonials of her pious search. On arriving, she related to the Emperor how she had discovered the holy cross, and by what prodigy it had been distinguished from those found with it, and also the superscription, which had been separated from the cross. The Emperor was deeply affected, and still more so when his mother presented to him some of the sacred nails used by the Jews in the crucifixion of our Lord.[2] For scarcely had that precious cross, which Helena prized more than all the riches of the Roman Empire, at length been placed in her possession, than she remembered that she had not the nails, and had accordingly sent to desire Judas to search for them likewise. He obeyed the order, and after having dug in the earth for some time, is said to have found them shining as gold, and to have borne them to the Empress, who, on beholding them, worshipped them with great reverence. One of these nails she put into a bridle for the horse her son rode upon,[3] and another she reserved for the helmet he was accustomed to wear in battle;[4] for both her affection and piety united in the hope that these sacred relics would preserve her beloved Constantine uninjured from his foes.[5]

This iron rim, which formerly adorned the helmet of

[1] Lemprière. [2] Platina's Lives of the Popes.

[3] One of the nails Constantine made into a horse's bit, which he used in battle.—*Platina.*

[4] St. Ambrose. Caxton's Golden Legend.

[5] Burton's Rome.

the Roman Emperor, and was made from one of the nails used in the crucifixion, is still in existence. It is about three-eighths of an inch broad, and a tenth of an inch thick, and constitutes the most important part of the famous iron crown of Lombardy, with which the Emperor Napoleon Buonaparte in modern times caused himself to be invested at his coronation; being attached to the inside of it all round. Upwards of 1500 years have passed away since this crown was presented to Constantine by his mother, and, says an intelligent writer, "there is not a speck of rust upon it; which I was desired to notice as a permanent miracle, by the chanoine who called my attention to that fact. The crown itself consists of a broad circle of gold, set with large rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, and is kept in the Cathedral of Monza, over an altar, closely shut up within folding doors of gilt brass. This exhibition is attended with some ceremony, and the cross is not usually taken down from its elevated position to gratify curiosity by a nearer view; but we were more fortunate. The crown is kept in an octagonal aperture in the centre of the cross; it is composed of six equal pieces of beaten gold, joined together by close hinges; and the jewels, of embossed gold ornaments, are set in a ground of blue-and-gold enamel; which, to me, was interesting, as it exhibited an exact resemblance to the workmanship of the enamelled part of a gold ornament now in the Ashmolean Museum, which once belonged to King Alfred, and is the most curious piece of antiquity in that museum."

Constantine the Great, at the beginning of his reign, wore the simple laurel and radiant crowns used by his predecessors in the Empire, but was the first Roman Emperor who made use of the diadem of pearls and rich stones; and the fashion, not only of the crown, but

of the coronation of Constantine, was afterwards followed by the rest of the monarchs of Europe.[1]

St. Gregory of Tours assures us that the third of these sacred nails was thrown into the Adriatic by the Empress herself,[2] during a storm (perhaps on her homeward passage, as we are told she conveyed the holy treasure herself to her son), in consequence of which the sailors entered on that sea, as sanctified, with fastings, prayers, and singing hymns, even to his own day.[3]

Two more of the precious nails are noticed by a modern writer, of which one was to be found in the Treasury of St. Mark at Venice, and the other in the church of the Benedictine Monastery at Catania: the latter, by its miraculous powers, prevented the destruction of that edifice in the overwhelming eruption of Ætna in the year 1669, when the lava flowed all round the monastery, and left it standing, amidst liquid fire, unhurt!

Amongst the bridal offerings presented by Hugh the Great, son of the King of France, to Athelstan the English monarch on the occasion of his soliciting the hand of the Princess Edilda, daughter of Edward the Elder, for his wife, was the sword of Constantine the Great, whose name, as that of its former possessor, was inscribed upon it in letters of gold; and upon its pommel, rising up above the rich plates of gold, was to be seen one of the four nails of the crucifixion. That one of the nails did fall into the hands of the French king, is a fact recorded by Burton;[4] and we are told that when Hugh presented this famous sword to King Athelstan, it was accompanied by other sacred relics—

[1] Selden's Titles of Honour.
[2] Or her son.—Platina, from Ambrose.
[3] Butler, Platina.
[4] Antiquities of Rome.

a portion of the true cross enclosed in crystal, and a fragment of the crown of thorns; which last precious memorials were presented by the English monarch to the Abbey of Malmesbury.

Helena, having first built a church upon the ground where the cross was found, *returned* and brought the nails with which our Saviour's body was fastened, as a present to her son.[1]

The cross which Helena conveyed to Rome on her return, was placed in a silver case set with gold and precious stones,[2] and was deposited in the Sessorian Church,[3] or rather in the edifice sometimes so called, because it stood upon the site, or to speak more properly, near a great building named Il Sessorio, the Temple of Venus and Cupid. This pagan edifice was destroyed by the pious Constantine on the occasion of his founding the Church of Santa Croce, and the remains of the structure are yet visible as you enter the vineyard near the church. Santa Croce is one of the seven principal churches of Rome, and situated within the walls of the city, upon the top of Mount Esquiline.[4] At the time it was built by Constantine, that part of Rome was much more inhabited than in the present day, as is evident from the adjacent ruins. "It now stands quite alone, with no buildings near it, amidst groves, gardens, and vineyards; and the number of mouldering ornaments and tottering arches that surround it, give it a solemn and affecting appearance. It is remarkable for the antiquity of its shape."[5]

This church, built by Constantine, at the express request of Helena, derived its name of "Santa Croce" from the circumstance of the Empress herself depositing in it some pieces of the holy cross, and a part of

[1] Platina's Lives of the Popes. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] Burton, Roman Itinerary. [5] Burton.

the earth taken from Mount Calvary; some of the latter was placed under the church, and the rest over the roof.[1] Here also were deposited two of the thorns, one of the thirty pieces of silver, a part of the cross of the *Good Thief*, one of the nails used at the crucifixion, and the superscription on the cross in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; the latter, which was in red letters and much damaged, was as follows:—

"HIESVS NAZARENVS REX IVDAEOR."

This last relic was discovered in A.D. 1492, during the Pontificate of Innocent VIII., in a little leaden chest, where it had been concealed above one thousand years.

Without more minutely describing the interior of this beautiful church, suffice it to say, that by a door or gate you descend to the Chapel of St. Helena, into which no female is permitted to enter except on the 20th of March, which is the anniversary festival of the consecration of the church, and then no men are admitted. The ceremony of the consecration of Santa Croce was performed by Pope Sylvester.[2]

[1] Keysler, Eustace, Burton.

[2] It was in the year 1601, when Rubens was staying at Rome, that he executed a commission he had received from the Archduke Albert to paint three pictures for the Church of Santa Croce di Gierusalemme, connected with which he had formerly borne the cardinal's hat. One of these pictures represented the *Finding of the Cross*, and the others, the Crucifixion, and the Crowning with Thorns. These pictures, which were very remarkable as specimens of the style of painting of this great master in the art at that period of his career, were brought to England in 1611, and sold the following year by auction.* The Crucifixion, afterwards on its way by sea to Count Woronzow, at St. Petersburgh, was unhappily lost. Rubens painted twelve pictures, representing events from the history of Constantine, formerly in the Orleans Gallery, but now scattered through different private collections in England, several of which display great beauties "These sketches—for they are not finished pictures—were brought

* Noel's Translation of the Life of Rubens.

Constantine erected many other churches:[1] one of these was dedicated to the two martyrs, "St. Marcellinus the Presbyter and St. Peter the Exorcist, and stood in the Via Labicana."[2] He built a church to St. Paul, and also another to St. Peter, which last stood not far from the heathen temple of Apollo, and was erected at the instigation of St. Sylvester. This famous person had been banished by the tyrants, but when Constantine favoured Christianity, he left Mount Soracte, whither he had retired, and came to Rome, where he obtained great influence with Constantine. He was made Bishop, A.D. 314, as successor to St. Melchiades.

"The Constantinian Church," called the Lateran, was also built and richly endowed by Constantine.

These churches, like those in the East, were distinguished for their holy relics. One, that of St. Giacomo Scossa Cavalli, is said to have derived its name from the following circumstance. A cartload of relics, among which was the stone designed for the sacrifice of Isaac, another on which Christ stood when among the doctors in the temple, some holy earth which had been brought from Jerusalem, and even, it is said, some drops of the blood of our Saviour, were dispatched from the Church of Santa Croce di Gierusalemme to that of St. Peter; when stopping at this spot, neither whipping nor any other means could induce the horses to go a step

to England with the Flemish portion of the Orleans Gallery, in 1792. The history of this grand acquisition, the dangers encountered by the purchaser, a Mr. Slade, and the artifices to which he had recourse in their removal; the indignation and threats of the French painters, crowding round the packages, and in despair to see this rich collection carried out of their country, would form a striking chapter in the biography of pictures. The twelve sketches of the history of Constantine were valued, as a series, at £1,000; but no one having come forward to purchase them, they were unfortunately, we must allow, dispersed among various purchasers, and brought double the sum."—Mrs. Jameson's Notes on the Life of Rubens.

[1] Milner. [2] Platina.

further. Accordingly the occurrence was considered a divine intimation, and the whole of the relics were deposited on the spot.[1]

In the Church of St. Peter in Vinculo, at Rome, are said to be the identical chains which bound St. Peter, both at Rome and at Jerusalem: at the latter city, St. Helena found a relic of the chain by which she judged St. Peter had been fastened, and therefore determined to offer it to the Pope, who possessed another fragment. It was received by him with much pomp and solemnity, and it is said that the identity was proved by the two chains uniting of their own accord when brought in sight of each other!

Pope Julius II. (A.D. 1503–1513) pulled down half of the Old Church of St. Peter's at Rome, and laid the foundation-stone of the new edifice himself. It was built on the plan of Michael Angelo.[2] Of the dome of this celebrated building, built under Pope Sixtus V., the following particulars are interesting, inasmuch as they commemorate our heroine, the Empress. It is said of the great artist, Michael Angelo, that having heard some one praise the Rotunda as an unparalleled work, he observed "that he would not only build a dome equally large, but build it in the air." He made good his assertion: the honour of the undertaking and design of the dome at St. Peter's is due to him. This amazing structure rests on four pillars, of ninety palmi in diameter, each of which is adorned with a white marble statue, twenty-two palmi high, without the pedestal. The first is St. Veronica, by Francesca Mochi; the second is St. Helena, by Andrea Bolgi; the third, St. Andrew, by Du Quesne; and the fourth, St. Longinus,[3] by Bernini,

[1] Keysler's Travels. [2] Roscoe's Leo the Tenth.

[3] The sacred lance, which pierced our Saviour's side, was formerly preserved with the statue of Longinus, but it is now kept in the

who also designed these ornaments.[1] Over each of these four statues is a fine tribune, or gallery, from

general repository for relics over the figure of St. Veronica. It is said that St. Helena discovered the iron of the lance. It was subsequently divided into two parts: the point was kept in the imperial palace at Constantinople, the other division in the Church of St. John of the Rock. It seems to be uncertain whether the division was made by Constantine II., who wished to give the point to Charlemagne; or whether Baldwin, while he was King of Constantinople, pawned it to the Venetians, from whom it was recovered by St. Louis, King of France. However, in 1492, Bajazet II., Sultan of Constantinople, sent the part which did not contain the point, as a present to Pope Innocent VIII., as a bribe to induce him not to protect his brother Zezim, who disputed the throne. The Pope sent a solemn embassy to receive it, and for a long time it was preserved in the Vatican. In 1500 it was placed in a magnificent chapel, where was the statue of Longinus; but when this chapel was destroyed by Julius II. it was removed to the case of St. Veronica, where it has remained ever since. Benedict XIV., in one of his works, assures us, that while he was canon of this Basilica, he had the exact measure of the point sent him from the Chapel Royal at Paris; and that, after comparing the two together, they corresponded so exactly that no manner of doubt could remain as to the identity of the two relics. These relics were exhibited on Good Friday and other days. No one is allowed to visit the place where they are kept, unless he has the rank of a canon. And those sovereigns or illustrious persons who have sought this privilege have first the honorary dignity of canon conferred upon them.—Burton's Antiquities of Rome.

[1] Bernini, by the niches he made in the pillars for the above-mentioned four statues, and especially by the stairs along the foundations of the pillars, for going down into the vaults, or *Sacra Grotte*, was censured for having weakened the foundations to a great degree, and soon after a cleft discovered itself in the cupola, occasioned by a violent clap of thunder. Bernini was near losing his head for this unlucky accident, but saved it by his success in removing and erecting the obelisk in the Piazza Navona. Michael Angelo, the designer of this dome, was apprehensive of such an accident; and earnestly desired that these four pillars, with their foundations, should not be in the least altered or meddled with. In the year 1700 this cleft in the cupola was widened by an earthquake.* The four supports of the dome of St. Peter's Church are about 240 feet in circumference, and 178 in height. Each of the four has two niches in front, one above the other. In the lower ones are statues of saints, and some of the most precious relics are preserved in them. St. Veronica has her veil or sudarium, St. Helena has part of the true cross.—Burton.

* Keysler's Travels.

whence, several times in the year, the relics, which are kept in a particular chapel, are exposed to public view.

In the vaults under the pedestals of each of the four statues an altar is erected, on which the history of the saint whose statue stands over it is represented in mosaic-work, by Fabio Christofore, from the designs of the famous Andrea Sacchi. Under these four altars are steps leading down to the other subterraneous vaults, which are full of excellent mosaic, that being the only work which could be proof against the dampness of the place. This mosaic-work was formerly the pavement of the whole Church of St. Peter.[1]

It has been objected that two out of the four principal niches in this church, those which are formed in the vast piles that support the dome, and which of course face the altar, should be appropriated by saints whose very names exist only in a legendary tale, viz., Saints Veronica and Longinus, while a third is devoted to St. Helena, whose statue, though she was a princess of great virtue and eminent piety, might stand with more propriety in the porch near the statue of her son; for in the early ages of Christianity the honour of being deposited within the church was reserved to martyrs, and Constantine had merely requested to be allowed to lie in the porch of the Basilica of the Apostles, which he had himself erected in Constantinople. On this account it is thought that the statues of apostles, the principal martyrs, doctors, and bishops, should alone have been admitted into St. Peter's Church. Eustace remarks that "the pictures, or rather the mosaics which have been substituted in the place of the original pictures, may be objected to on the same ground as the statues, as many of them represent per-

[1] Keysler.

sons and events totally unconnected with the sacred records, and sometimes not to be met with even in the annals of authentic history." The candid and judicious Erasmus would have the subjects of all the pictures exhibited in churches taken exclusively from the Holy Scriptures, while the histories of saints, when authentic, he thinks might furnish decorations for porticos, halls, and cloisters; had this advice been followed, many useless, some absurd, and a few profane representations might have been banished from the sacred place.

Shortly after her return from Palestine, Helena was taken ill. "The Empress, perceiving her last hour approach, gave her son excellent instructions concerning the government of his empire, and the manner in which he should regulate his own affairs and those of his family, both temporal and eternal. She commended to his care the legacies which she had made to virgins, and to the Church, as well as certain institutions for poor persons and widows, and the rewards which she was desirous of making her servants and the army, in proportion to their merits and the time they had been in her service. As for the territories she possessed in the Eastern and Western Empire, she bestowed them all on the young Cæsar the child of Constantine, who himself remained seated near her, kissing her hands, and bathing them with his tears. She was more afflicted with the sorrowful necessity of quitting him, than with the approach of death; and, collecting all her remaining strength, she gave him final advice, worthy of a mother and of a Christian princess. When she had communicated all her wishes for his august family and for the empire, she spoke no more, except to supplicate mercy from God: at length, in the midst of the consolations of her faith, full of hope and merit, she departed, to

receive in heaven a crown more glorious than that of which death had deprived her."[1]

The spot where Helena expired was, according to some writers, Nicomedia, by other accounts Constantinople, and some fix it at Rome. There is no division as to the day of her death, which is admitted to have been August 18th; but there is a difference of opinion as to the date, some thinking she died in the same year the cross was discovered, others making it one year or two years later. Thus, A.D. 326 is given by some as the date, A.D. 327 by others, and A.D. 328 by the rest.

If in 326 this event is fixed, it was the eightieth year of the Empress's age, and the twentieth of her son Constantine's reign.

"Constantine, anxious to pay to the last mortal remains of his mother, that respect which he had never refused her during her life,[2] caused the mournful ceremony of her funeral to be performed with extraordinary pomp and magnificence. By his orders, a porphyry vase, said to be the largest and richest in the world, was made, to contain, not only the ashes, but the whole body of this princess. This vase or urn consisted of one entire piece of porphyry, and the carvings upon it represented a lion and horsemen, with various other figures in bas-relief, without any heathenish emblems, these ornaments being in a middle taste of architecture, resembling those on the triumphal arch of her son Constantine. According to Crevier, the body of St. Helena, having been enclosed in this splendid urn, was conveyed by Constantine's directions to Rome, to be

[1] Butler.

[2] Constantine paid to his dying mother, "as he had always done, every duty of filial piety. His tenderness and respect for so worthy a mother, is one of the finest traits of this prince's life."*

* Crevier.

deposited in the tomb of the Emperors, within the walls of the city, and magnificent fêtes were held in Rome for the space of three months upon this mournful occasion. Constantine, afterwards thinking that a monument to her own memory alone would be more worthy of this excellent parent, erected a round building outside the city, to receive her honoured remains. This splendid mausoleum was situated near the road to Palestrina, on the Via Lavicana, about three miles from Rome.

According to Nicephorus and others, Helena's body was removed, two years after, from this mausoleum to Constantinople, and buried there, and Constantine, afterwards dying in Nicomedia, was interred with her. In the pretty Church of the Panthenorator, at Constantinople, may be seen the tombs of Constantine and St. Helena, each raised about eight feet high on a column, the summit terminating in a point cut into four sides, in the fashion of a diamond. "While Constantinople was in the power of the Venetians, they took the body of St. Helena from its tomb, and carried it to Venice, where it is now preserved entire. They attempted the same thing with the body of Constantine, but did not succeed: the two tombs are of red jasper, and to this day two broken parts are to be seen on that of Constantine, where they made the attempt."[1]

As, however, Nicephorus did not live till the fourteenth century, later historians have preferred believing the Torre Pignattara, at Rome, to be the tomb of this famous Empress;[2] and Bower, in his History of the Popes, tells us that this costly sepulchre, made by Constantine, had been plundered by thieves in the time of Innocent II, (A.D. 1143), and the body carried off by

[1] Travels of La Broquière, translated by Johnnes.
[2] Burton's Rome: Keysler.

them from its tomb. An earlier account places the removal of Helena's body from Rome in 849: yet are the remains of the Empress even to this day worshipped in the Church of the Franciscans at Rome, called Ara Cœli, where they are said to repose in a rich shrine of porphyry, under the high altar, as related by several authors,[1] though no record exists of the truth of this assertion. Pope Anastasius IV found the porphyry sarcophagus, said to have contained Helena's remains, and "which, being dug up under Torre Pignattara, was damaged in several places. The Pope removed it to the Lateran Church, intending it for his own tomb, for he was a regular canon of that church. At his death, Anastasius was buried in the Lateran, in this tomb of porphyry: another account says, the Pope was disappointed of his intention, and that it has remained empty ever since. The ruins of the vast mausoleum of St. Helena were cleared by Pope Urban VIII. (1644), the structure having been much damaged by the barbarians. This Pope, desirous to preserve the memory of Helena, caused a chapel to be erected there, which he consigned to the protection of St. John de Lateran. From the Church of San Giovanni Laterano, the splendid urn is said to have been removed to its present resting-place, the Vatican Museum, by Pope Pius VI.: it rests there in the Sala a Croce Greca, with the Sarcophagus of St. Constantia, the daughter of her rival Theodora, the second wife of Constantius.[3]

In the year 1095, Notkar, Abbot of Hautvilliers, in the diocese of Rheims, wrote a history of the translation of the relics of St. Helena from Rome to that abbey,

[1] Keysler, Butler. [2] Bower's Hist. of the Popes.

[3] The present state of Torre Pignattara, as described by a traveller of our own times, is a small church, and a still smaller dwelling for the priest who has the care of the church, both being inclosed in a round circular brick wall of very bad architecture.

which was performed in 849, previous to the spoliation of her sepulchre by thieves. That author gives an authentic account of several miracles, wrought through the intercession of the saint, of some of which he testifies himself to have been an eye-witness, and the rest he learnt from the persons on whom they had been performed.[1] Part of this work, which Mr. Butler assures us is well written, was published by the Messieurs de Ste. Marthe and by Mabillon, and almost the whole is inserted by the Bollandists in their great work. The entire MS. copy is preserved at Hautvilliers, with an appendix, written by the same author, containing an account of two other miracles performed by the relics of this saint.

"In 1095,[1] Stephen of Blois and Adela, daughter of King William the Conqueror, with several members of the noble House of Blois, attended the religious festival of the removal of St. Helena's honoured remains to a place which had been prepared for them in the neighbourhood of Hautvilliers. The ceremony took place, October 28th, 1095, on the festival of St. Simon and St. Jude. Notkar, Abbot of Hautvilliers, who presided on this occasion, and was the original suggester of that posthumous honour to the sainted Empress, thus describes the pageant: 'At last the long-desired day arrived, and fell on a Sunday; all the great lights of the monastic order attended, with many archbishops and bishops; and of the secular powers were present Earl Stephen and Adela his wife, Constance, daughter of Philip, King of France, wife of Hugh, Earl of Treves, Stephen's brother, with many others, respectable in their way, whom I shall not here enumerate. Not only France, but even Lorraine, delighted to send her pious sons to the obsequies of such a queen; for how should

[1] Butler.

not all Christianity applaud her to whom all are so greatly indebted! There is a certain place, in prospect of all Hautvilliers, called by the inhabitants Montescola, where, on the high brow of a hill, a promontory stretches out into a convenient flat, fit for the reception of such venerated limbs. Here a tent was erected, large enough to accommodate the Earl and Countess, with their family, and all those of the sacred order. A consultation was then held as to what hour of the day the ceremony should take place, and we agreed that it should be after the mystery of the Holy Resurrection had been celebrated by Hugh, Bishop of Soissons; this being over, brethren of proper gravity were selected, who carried the relics of so glorious dust to the appointed place of interment, where the golden urn was opened, and enclosed with the bones was found this writing: 'Corpus Sanctæ Helenæ Reginæ, matris Constantini, sine capite. The body of St. Helena the Queen, the mother of Constantine, saving the head.' The sacred pledges were then deposited in another vase and re-interred, &c." The noblest person there present, Earl Stephen, who as highest in rank, was appointed to present the offering at the tomb; and he still further gratified the monks of Hautvilliers, by granting them some valuable privileges and immunities. Many miracles were said to be afterwards wrought at this tomb, which became no small source of gain to the Monastery of Hautvilliers.[1]

After the death of Helena,[2] Constantine showed a

[1] Lives of the Princesses of England, by Mary Anne Everett Green.

[2] "After Helena's death, Constantine erected to her honoured memory, in the middle of a great square in Constantinople, her own statue and his, with a large cross in the middle. He likewise erected her statue at Daphne, near Antioch, and several other places in Italy."*

* Butler.

particular kindness to Constantia, the daughter of Theodora. This princess, after the deaths of her husband and son, accepted an invitation to her brother's court; where she had first shared in the influence of Helena over the Emperor, and subsequently, during the absence of the Empress-Mother in the East, had filled her place near his person. After death had deprived Constantine of his much-cherished parent, Constantia acquired an entire ascendancy over her brother. Constantine also raised the brothers of Constantia, and their children, in dignity at this period; and the event proved how much more advantageous had been the previous severity of Helena, even to the princes themselves, than the indulgence of the Emperor; for by raising them, he gave umbrage to his own sons, who were no sooner in possession of the kingdom by his death, than they ruthlessly massacred their uncles and cousins.[1]

The Arians of this period owed their protection to Constantia's influence with the Emperor, which she exerted as much as possible to ameliorate their sufferings. Arius, the founder of the sect, had been excommunicated, and forbidden to enter Alexandria. The Princess afterwards was instrumental in procuring his recall, through the instrumentality of one of his followers, a priest, supposed to have been Acacius who succeeded Eusebius of Cæsarea. This personage insinuated himself into the Princess's confidence, and at length succeeded in making her believe that the disgrace of Arius had been brought about by his bishop's malice, through envy at the esteem in which he was held by the people, and that he was not tainted with the belief for which he had been condemned by the Council of Nice. Constantia adopted his views

[1] Crevier.

very forcibly, but dared not address Constantine on the subject. At last, being seized with a severe illness, in which she beheld her death approaching, she desired the Emperor, as her last request, to admit the priest to his favour, whom she had honoured with her own friendship, and listen to his conversation in matters of religion; adding, that she feared his government would receive a fatal shock from the persecution and banishment of innocent people, Constantine, who was tenderly attached to his sister, promised to attend to her request, and admitted the priest from that time into his confidence; who so effectually worked upon the Emperor's mind, that he secured the recall of Arius from exile; who, after making a written declaration of his faith, conformable to the doctrines laid down in the Council of Nice, and swearing it to be his true belief, was again received by Constantine into the Christian Church.[1]

The Church of St. Constantia at Rome is situated near that of St. Agnes (without the Porta Pia, or Nomentana): it was formerly the Mausoleum of the Princess Constantia, and at a period still earlier than that, a temple of Bacchus. "The tomb of this British princess, or rather the temple in which she was interred, is of circular form, supported by a row of coupled columns, and crowned with a dome. Behind the pillars runs a gallery, the vaulted roof of which is encrusted with ancient mosaics, representing little genii playing with clusters of grapes, amidst the winding tendrils of the vine. The tomb of the saint, a vast porphyry vase, ornamented with various figures, once stood in a large niche, directly opposite the door; but as the body had been deposited many years ago under the altar, the sarcophagus was transported to the Museum of the Vatican.

[1] History of the Arians.

The *Sala a Croce Greca,* in the Vatican, containing the above relic of antiquity, is supported by columns, and paved with ancient mosaic: it is furnished with statues, and lined with bassi-relievi.

"Both the removal of the sarcophagus and the placing the body of the Princess as a saint under the altar of the mausoleum, then converted into a church, were performed by orders of Pope Alexander the Fourth.

"The sarcophagus of St. Constantia, formed with its lid of one block of red porphyry, is beautifully ornamented in basso-relievo, with little infant Cupids employed in the vintage, and bordered with tendrils and arabesques,—an appropriate device for the locality to which the last remains of Constantia were consigned by her brother,—the Temple of Bacchus, and where for ages they remained undisturbed." [1]

St. Helena[2] was canonized for the great act of bringing the true cross from Jerusalem to Italy.

> "Herself in person went to seek that sacred cross,
> Whereon our Saviour died; which found, as it was sought,
> From Salem unto Rome triumphantly she brought."
>
> *Drayton's Poly Olbion.*

The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was celebrated by the Roman Church[3] on the 14th of September, and also at Jerusalem by the Greeks and

[1] Eustace's Tour.

[2] The Greeks venerate Constantine and Helena together on the 21st of May. In the old style Holy Rood Day was celebrated on the 26th of September. The day of the death of the Empress has received the name of St. Helen's Day. The Church of Rome has ranked this pious princess among her saints, and celebrates her festival by an express service.

[3] In the year 642, Heraclitus restored to Mount Calvary the true cross, which had been carried off, fourteen years before, by Cosroes, King of Persia, upon his taking Jerusalem from the Emperor Phocas; in memory of this event the festival of the Exaltation of the Cross was afterwards held on the 14th of September.—Ency. Brit.

Latins as early as the year 335. The first occasion of this festival was the miraculous appearance of the cross to Constantine, and the subsequent discovery of that sacred wood by the Empress-Mother, St. Helena.[1] The 14th of September is called Holyrood Day. In former times every church had its rood-loft, which was a gallery across the nave, at the entrance of the chancel of the church,[1] on which the holy rood or cross, when perfectly made, had the image of our Saviour extended with that of the Virgin Mary and St. John on each side. This representation alluded to a passage in St. John (chapter xix., v. 26), Christ on the Cross saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing by. This was called the rood, and it was placed over the screen which divided the nave from the chancel of our churches, and conveyed to our ancestors a full type of the Christian Church. The Church militant was represented by the nave, the Church triumphant by the chancel, intimating that all who would go from the one to the other, must pass under the rood, or in other words, carry the cross and suffer affliction. Instances of the rood may be seen in Norwich and Winchester Cathedrals.

That in Norwich Cathedral was erected by Bishop

[1] The ecclesiastical emblems with which St. Helena is represented are these; she is crowned, with a large cross in her arms, of a tall stature, and she is also occasionally depicted with a *beard*, and *tied to the cross*. S. Borgia de Cruce Veliternâ, c. 27, &c. At the foot of the Velitern Cross, beneath the figure of our Lord, is a circular compartment, with a half-figure of a woman, having a nimbus round the head, the hair curled, and adorned with a band, as if of pearls, and in a rich jewelled dress. This may be conjectured to be the Empress Helena, to whom was granted the favour of finding the true cross, and who is represented in several ancient crosses. On the reverse side, in the centre compartment, is an Agnus Dei, enamelled upon a field of gold, without nimbus or banner, which are usually found in this emblem of the Lamb which is so frequent in early Christian art. In the oldest examples, as in this, the colour of the cross is red.—Pugin's Glossary of Ecclesiastical Architecture.

Hart. It is at present the organ-loft, on which was erected the principal rood or cross: beneath it was situated Holyrood Chapel, in which Jesus mass was sung once every week.

To the Chapel of the Sepulchre, in Winchester Cathedral, which is a dark chapel below the organ-stairs, there used formerly to be great resort in Holy Week, to witness the Mass of the Passion of our Saviour, as yet celebrated in the Roman churches on the Continent. On the walls of this chapel are discovered rude paintings of the taking down from the cross, the lying in the sepulchre, the descent into limbus, and the appearance of our Lord to Mary Magdalen, from whose lips the word "Rabboni" is seen to proceed, with kindred subjects.

Since the 8th century the festival of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross has been removed by the Latin Church to the 3rd of May, which is called Holy Cross Day, or the Day of the Invention of the Cross; it being supposed that the event took place about the month of May, or early in the spring of the year 326.[1]

One of the earliest Christian writers has composed two hymns for the occasions of Holy Cross Day and Holy Rood Day, and they may be found in the Roman breviary. One of these alludes to the passion-flower, which has obtained the name of the Holy-rood flower, not only because it flowers at this period of the year, but because the leaves, tendrils, and different parts of the flower, have been supposed, by the religious, to represent the instruments of our blessed Saviour's passion; whence the name Passi Flora, and the great veneration in which it is held in some foreign countries: the five stamens have been compared to

[1] Butler, Burton.

the five wounds of Christ, the three styles to the nails by which he was fixed to the cross, the column which elevates the germs to the cross itself or to the pillar to which he was bound, and the rays of the nectary to the crown of thorns.[1] The common passion flower, which lasts a long while in blossom, generally goes out of flower after Holyrood.

In the primitive ages of Christianity, before churches for divine worship were common, service was often performed under a cross raised in some convenient place. Such was St. Paul's Cross in London, where the practice continued until the Reformation. Such was also the antique cross in the Market-place of Halifax, Yorkshire. The cross being a sign used in civil contracts, it became usual to touch or swear by it before reading and writing in transactions relative to public and private business, and crosses were erected in the open places of towns and cities, where even to this day fairs, marts, statutes, and markets are held.[2] Sermons were preached at these spots, and public pageants or processions usually commenced from them or terminated there: hence Edward I. erected crosses at every place where the corpse of Queen Eleanor rested on its way to interment, desiring those spots to be considered holy. Every churchyard in early times had its cross, on which the bodies of the dead were placed while the service was read; every turning in the road had also its cross, and the boundaries of parishes had the same marks.[3]

At Leighton Buzzard, in Bedfordshire, is a relic of considerable antiquity, in the form of a Gothic cross of stone, beautiful even in decay; it stands in the open

[1] Hortus Anglicus. [2] Green's Hist. of Worcester.
[3] Clavis Calendaria.

area of the Market-place, and is supposed to have withstood the operations of time for more than 500 years, but by whom or on what occasion it was erected, even tradition does not attempt to reveal; its form is pentagonal, in height thirty-eight feet: the upper story is divided into five niches, each containing a statue; the first is in an episcopal habit, the second represents the Virgin and Jesus, the third appears to be designed for St. John the Evangelist, the others are too mutilated to be defined.

In the centre of the square at Halifax, a little higher in the street than the cross, stood a Maypole used by the Romans in their celebrated festival called Floralia, which usually commenced on the 4th of the Calends of May. The feasts held at that time were called Maxima, and were kept by costly banquets and oblations. Constantine the Great forbade these entertainments, but they were renewed by Honorius and Arcadius in the first year of their empire, and in Britain, under other forms, have descended to our own times.

Nothing can exceed the affection the Britons testified for the memory of their excellent Empress, St. Helena. To this patroness of churches innumerable sacred edifices have been dedicated throughout our island; to enumerate the whole of them would be impossible. Far and wide, edifices, crosses, roads, and other monuments, have been raised to perpetuate her goodness.

In Colchester, the native place of St. Helena, most things have a reference to her and to her finding the cross; the streets in particular exemplify this, the main street representing the shaft or body of the cross, and Head Street and North Hill the transverse part of the

same.[1] In the parish of St. Nicholas, in that city, there is a cave bearing this princess's name; and the chapel, a place of great antiquity, is said to have been founded by the Empress herself. Just within the entrance of Colchester Castle are also exhibited some clumsy images of Helena and Constantine, carved in stone, but manifestly of modern date. A curious testimonial to the Empress exists in King Henry the Fifth's Charter to the City of Colchester, the initial letter of which represents St. Helena before the cross, finely illuminated.[2]

In London, where Helena held her court alternately with Colchester, a religious edifice, to the east of Crosby Square, was founded by William Fitzwilliam, in commemoration of the discovery of the cross by St. Helena. It is said to have been built A.D. 1210, and was called "the Priory of St. Helen's the Less." The Church of St. Helen's the Great stands north-east of Threadneedle Street.

In Yorkshire[3] abundant traces exist of St. Helena; in York four churches bear her much-loved name: attached to one, an ancient edifice in the parish of Leeds, was a medicinal well, yet in existence. There was also Burgh Wallis, near Doncaster, St. Helen's Foord, at Wetherby, and St. Ellen's Chapel, at Wilton, which last was founded by Sir William Bulmer in the reign of Henry the Eighth; one in Werkdyke, another at Kilusea, in the Holderness wapentake, with the churches of Skipwith, Stillingfleet, Thoranby, in the Ouse and Derwent wapentake. In Cornwall there is a church dedicated to St. Helen, and the Church of Elstow or Helenstowe in Bedford, since turned into a

[1] Morant's Hist. of Colchester. [2] Britton and Brayley.
[3] Allen's Hist. of York.

monastery, is also named as having this Queen for its patron saint.

There are churches dedicated to St. Helena at Derby, Warrington, East Medina in the Isle of Wight, Norwich, Worcester, and Abingdon. St. Helen's, Worcester, is one of the most ancient edifices in that city.[1] The ancient hospital of St. Helen, at Abingdon, when refounded in 1533, received the denomination of Christchurch.[2] In Monmouthshire churches exist of St. Helen's name: there is also one at Wilton, a town situated in a vale on the Humber, dedicated to her.

St. Helen's Porch is yet in existence in the mean church of St. Helen's, Auckland, a village so called from the name of the Empress. In 1844, in the month of April, the tongue of the bell of St. Helen's, Auckland, dropped out, which, after having been divested of the rust which had been accumulating from time immemorial, was found to bear this inscription: "Sancta Helena, ora pro nobis," also a bishop's mitre and crest, with the initials A. and W. at right angles. Very superstitious ideas were formerly attached to bells.[3]

At the east end of the side-aisles in Durham Cathedral are gates leading into the east transept, commonly called the Nine Altars. One of these altars was dedicated to St. Aidan and St. Helena.[4]

This interesting part of Durham Cathedral is thus described:—

"In the eastern or highest part within the church were the nine altars, dedicated and erected in honour of several saints, and of them taking their names, as the inscriptions thereof will declare; the altars being placed north and south, one from another, along the front of the

[1] Green's Worcester.
[2] Magna Brit.
[3] Fosbrooke's British Monachism.
[4] Hutchinson's Durham.

church, in an alley the whole breadth thereof. In the middle of which front was the Altar of the Holy Fathers, St. Cuthbert and St. Bede, having all the aforesaid altars equally divided on either hand, on the south four, and on the north four.

"On the south were the following:—

"1. The Altar of St. Oswald and St. Lawrence.

"2. The Altar of St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Catherine.

"3. The Altar of St. John the Baptist and St. Margaret.

"4. The Altar of St. Andrew and St. Mary Magdalene, being the outermost altar towards the south.

"On the north side of St. Cuthbert and St. Bede's Altar, were these four following:—

"1. The Altar of St Martin and St. Edmund.

"2. The Altar of St. Peter and St. Paul.

"3. The Altar of St. Aidanus and St. Helena.

"4. The Altar of the Holy Archangel, St. Michael, being the outermost towards the north.

"Over each of these altars is a window representing the history which is attached to it. On the north side, the third was the picture of St. Aidane and St. Helena, with the like windows and lights as the rest, "presenting the picture of St. Aidane in his episcopal attire, with a crosier in his hand, whose soul after his death was represented to be carried to heaven in a sheet by two angels. In this were some part of the history of Christ, and the picture of a king and two other saints; as also the picture of St. Helena in a blue habit, she being a princess; which contained the story of the religious of all orders of her sex, and her resorting often to their churches, and the picture of Our Lady and the Angel Gabriel appearing to her, and the Holy

Ghost overshadowing her, with the lily springing out of the lilypot; and underneath the middle stonework were four angels. Above were four turret windows, with four apostles; and the picture of God Almighty above all, in another little window, with Christ in his arms."[1]

It would almost appear that the subject of the Conception had been expressly selected for St. Helen's window, from the fact that a slur had been thrown on her bright fame by the second marriage of her husband, and that the lily springing forth from the lilypot was an emblem of her innocence.

"A Popish chapel, dedicated to St. Helen, was in use in Queen Elizabeth's time, in Halifax in Yorkshire, near the remains of which, in the present day, is a remarkably fine well, bearing also the name of the Empress. Very near St. Helen's Well, a spot yet bears the name of Halliwell, or Holy Well Green.[2] It was common among the early Christians to dedicate remarkable springs to particular saints, to whose merits any cures they might perform were attributed. Upon the saint's day whose name the well bore, the people were wont to assemble to make their offerings or vow to her, a custom which was afterwards changed to that of adorning the well with boughs and flowers, and entertaining themselves with music, dancing, eating cakes, and drinking ale. The Chapel of St. Helen, at Halifax, is

[1] This extract is taken from the "History and Antiquities of Durham Cathedral," to which the reader is referred for an account at length of the other eight altars.

[2] "I have the copy of a deed without date, but which, by the witnesses, must have been executed between the years 1279 and 1324, wherein William de Osete grants an assart in Linley to Henry de Sacro Fonte de Staynland, which shows that the name of the above Holy Well is no new conceit, but a real piece of antiquity, perhaps much older than the time of this deed."—Watson's Hist. of Halifax.

now converted into a cottage, but, it can be seen, has been a place of greater account: in one of the walls they show you a large stone, which is called the Cross," continues the historian of this place, "which is sometimes visited by strangers, who at the same time inquire for the well; and from the behaviour of some of them, the inhabitants concluded they were Papists, whose zeal brought them hither, to behold this once famous place, of which their forefathers were despoiled. Clarke Bridge, Halifax, seems to have been first built by the clergy, to enable them to pass more conveniently from the church to the Holy Well on the opposite bank."

The worship of springs and fountains is of very ancient date, as appears from heathen authors and Christian monuments, and among many other British customs, was kept up by the Saxons long after their conversion to Christianity. This appears from injunctions and canons made to forbid them. In 967, it appears from some constitutions of Edgar, taken from a Saxon penitential: "We teach that priests shall abolish all heathenish superstitions, and forbid the worship of wells, and of trees, and of stones." Here an allusion is also made to the stone altars erected in the fields, of which many remains may be found. The same penitential contains a prohibition against "vowing or bringing alms or offerings to any wells, or stones, or tree, or to any creature, but only in God's name to God's church." A Saxon homily of Bishop Lupus, mentions some, who, being seduced by the devil, in their afflictions vow their alms either to well or stone; and in another, he cautions men against worshipping wells or trees. This foolish custom of worshipping and bringing offerings to trees and fountains continued after

the Conquest, as appears by a synod at London in 1102, by the constitutions of Walter, Bishop of Worcester, in 1240, and the injunctions of Oliver, Bishop of Lincoln, in 1280; which two last forbid the worshipping of Cerne and Roll's Well, St. Edward's Well, near St. Clement's at Oxford, and St. Laurence's Well, near Peterborough.[1] The superstitious veneration paid to St. Winifred's Well needs scarcely to be mentioned.[2]

After the accession of Constantine to the imperial dignity, Helena is said to have revisited her native country. It is on record, that she did so after her return from Palestine, which is unlikely at her extreme age: at an earlier date she most probably returned to Britain, either to visit her grandson Constans, or to inspect the government which Constantine had entrusted to his delegates. Kennett, in his "Parochial Antiquities," declares, that "after Helena discovered the cross, and on her return homewards, she built a castle of her own name in Silesia, and another in Spain, near Callacium, which we now call Cales; and first arriving in Ireland, which was but a short cut from Spain, and thence steering for North Wales, landed at Aber Segont, near that fair walled town which we now call Caernarvon, where Constans, her grandchild, had built a city." Within the old town there still stands a little chapel, and a delicate spring of running water close by, both bearing St. Helen's name, in memory of her landing there; and from the gates of this city is both a crossway and also a cross of stone, standing in Bivio. Between the two ways, ariseth a great causey of hard durable stone, for such is the nature of those stones that they will not wear away, the way on each side being worn out knee-deep, which the inhabi-

[1] Mag. Brit. [2] Morant's History and Antiquities of Essex.

tants call Sarn Elen Weddaw, *i.e.*, St. Helen the Powerful's Causeway, and runneth southward through the rocky ragged straits of the mountains, even to the south parts of the kingdom."[1]

The noted Sarn or Llwybr Helen, the Causeway or Path of Helen, which is a road through North Wales, supposed to have been made by this Queen,[2] is thus described by Pennant:—"This road is now entirely covered with turf, but by the rising of it, is in most parts very visible; beneath are the stones which form it, and it extends in all its course to the breadth of eight yards. There are tumuli near it in various places, it being very usual for the Romans to inter near their highways. Close to the part in question (where this road appears for the first time on a common) is one, in which were found five urns; the whole materials of it are composed of burnt earth and stones, with several fragments of bricks, which had been placed round the urns to keep them from being crushed."

The causeway of Helen also ran under the summit of the vast Berwyn mountains, being there an artificial road called Fordd Helen, or Helen's way,[3] and those also in Llanbadyr Odyn in Cardiganshire, and from Brecknock to Neath in Glamorganshire, passed under the name of this great Empress. Pen Caer Helen is a lofty hill, about twenty-four miles from Segontium: Pennant ascended to the summit, in hopes of discovering more of Helen's noted road, but without success. Mars ar Helen, or the Field of Helen, is also the name given to another part which Giraldus considered the course of the road. Of the Via Devana, the same

[1] Kennett's Parochial Antiquities.
[2] Pennant.
[3] Pennant, from the annotation on Camden.

author remarks: "There is no Roman road so perfect as this; like the Via Occidentalis, it bears the name of Sarn Helen.[1] The foundation of almost all the roads through Wales have, in fact, been attributed to St. Helena, the mother of Constantine.[1]

[1] Kennett's Parochial Antiquities.

CARTANDIS.[1]

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THE history of this Queen forms a touching episode in the life of Maximus the Roman, who ruled in Britain in the fourth century. She was the wife of Eugenius I., King of Scots,—a princess of the blood royal of Wales, and is cited as an instance of connubial affection.

Eugenius was slain in a fatal battle fought against Maximus, who had invaded Scotland; and his body, which was discovered among heaps of the dead, was interred, by order of that leader, with the honour and ceremony usually bestowed on the funeral of Roman princes. Afterwards an edict was passed, that by an

[1] This is a variation of the name of Cartismandua.

appointed day all the Scots should quit that part of the kingdom, under penalty of death or imprisonment: they were likewise required to surrender their houses and possessions to such persons as were nominated by the Romans. In consequence of this decree, many took refuge in Ireland, the Western Isles, Norway, and Denmark; while the few who remained were either taken prisoners by the Picts, then in alliance with the Romans, or enlisted from pure despair in the service of their enemies.[1]

Cartandis, widow of the deceased King, learning that his remains had been consigned to the earth under another form of religion than her own,[2] was distressed with apprehensions for the repose of his departed spirit, and from the moment of his funeral obsequies had remained constantly on the spot, which contained the relics of all that was dear to her, occupying herself in particular prayers and devotions for the soul of the dead. Many noble ladies were with her, who, joining in her mourning, united their own devotions with hers, for their husbands and other relatives who had been slain with Eugenius in defending their country, and were interred at the same place.

While occupied in this manner, the Picts, who had first instigated Maximus to issue the edict of banishment, arrived at the spot and interrupted them in their sorrowful duty, by acquainting Cartandis with the penalty attached to the neglect of the Roman mandate. The supplications of Cartandis and her attendants to be left unmolested were vain; the fierce Picts insisted on their complying with the decree, and enforcing their commands with violence, they ill-treated and insulted many of these noble and unfortunate women.

[1] Holinshed, Scott.

[2] She was probably of the sect of Pelagius, who was a Welshman.

The Queen, accompanied by some of her British relatives, two gentlewomen, and a male attendant, repaired in person to the presence of Maximus, to complain of the indignity which had been offered her. She addressed a pathetic remonstrance to that general, soliciting his permission for herself and her maidens to continue in that country during the remainder of their lives, even though it were in the most servile state, provided that at their death they might be interred in the same grave as their husbands. Maximus, compassionating the misfortunes and affliction of Cartandis, whose conjugal affection he could not but admire, assigned to her the city of Carrick for an abode, with certain other revenues for the maintenance of her royal dignity.

The generous Maximus also appointed some persons to attend Cartandis for her protection while on her progress to a village not far distant from Carrick: scarcely, however, had the Roman escort safely conveyed her thither, and departed, after receiving her farewell and thanks, having, as they thought, left her in security, than a band of Pictish robbers on horseback was encountered by the ill-fated party. The fierce troop put the groom of Cartandis to the sword, and not only roughly treated her female attendants, but despoiled them and their royal mistress of all they possessed. Cartandis, however, succeeded in effecting her escape back to Maximus; the Roman general being converted from a foe into a friend. He received her with all the honour and respect due to her rank and sufferings, and, as nearly as he was able, restored to her the value of the property of which she had been deprived: the remainder was soon after regained, upon the capture of the robber Picts, who were punished with death for the outrage which they had committed.

Cartandis, on this, became a mark for the enmity of the Picts, when they learnt how kindly Maximus had received her, and how severely he had punished those who had despoiled and insulted her. They sent a deputation of nobles of their nation to complain to him of his having thus taken part against them in favour of a woman who was their enemy, and, moreover, a prisoner and in their power. For her sake, they said Maximus ought not to have put to death men who were friends of theirs, and allies of Rome: they proceeded to require that, in conformity with the proscription which had been issued, Cartandis should be despoiled of her possessions, and detained a captive in Britain.

Cartandis was herself present at the interview of Maximus with the Pictish chieftains, and had to support a scene of great trial, before the Roman general surrounded by the powerful soldiers of the empire, as she listened as these barbarians proceeded in discussing the future destiny they desired to be awarded her. When they came to that part of their embassy which concerned her imprisonment, and she perceived their design was to send her to Wales, her former country, in opposition to that wish nearest her heart, she broke forth into a passionate lamentation, bewailing in piteous accents her miserable fate, and entreating rather that her life might be offered upon her husband's tomb.

Raising her clasped hands to Maximus, she besought that generous prince, in the most earnest and pathetic manner, that he would be pleased to permit her either to pass the sad remainder of her present widowed state in the manner she found most conformable to her feelings, or else to take it from her at once. At this moving spectacle, all present, the Picts alone excepted, were deeply affected, and the sorrow-stricken Queen obtained her supplicated boon: the request of the Pictish

nobles was refused, and Cartandis, having a portion assigned to her, suitable to her royal birth and dignity, received permission to depart into whatever quarter of the country she pleased, and was suffered to live from that time forward, under the protection of the mighty Roman name, unmolested and undisturbed. [1]

[1] Holinshed.

HELENA AP EUDDA.

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THOUGH Helena ap Eudda is less distinguished in British History than her illustrious relative and sainted namesake, the mother of Constantine, her character, and the particulars of her life, are not devoid of interest, as affording an instance of female influence, and as one of the earliest patrons of Christianity.

The father of Helena was son of Caradocus, Duke of Cornwall, the ancient tin country, and grandson of the

Asclepiodatus,[1] or "Bran ap Llyr,"[2] so noted in the times of Constantius. Eudda,[3] or Octavius, as he was denominated by the Romans, Duke of the Wisseans,[4] had married Guala, sister of St. Helena; and received with her, as a bridal dowry, the kingdom of North Wales, it being the second time that territory had been conveyed to a new line of monarchs, by marriage with a daughter of that royal house. Eudda and Guala, by their union, connected in one the families of Wales and Cornwall; and the vast possessions thus united under their control, were destined to become, in process of time, the marriage-portion of their only child Helena,[5] whose noble inheritance caused her to be sought by many an aspiring adventurer. The young princess herself, who was born at Caer Segont, or Caernarvon, possessed qualifications which rendered her worthy of her lofty destiny. The increasing years of her aged parent made him anxious to see this child, who was his sole heir, settled in marriage with some prince, whose merits entitled him to succeed to the regal dignity; and fearing, lest in the event of his own death, without some previous arrangement to that effect, other aspirants to the crown might spring up, Eudda called a council of state, to take the subject into consideration. The king inquired of his assembled nobles, which of his family they would prefer to reign over them at his death, and

[1] Rowland's Mona Antiqua.

[2] Bran ap Llyr is celebrated for his valour, and as being the ancestor of Arthur and all those heroes who contended against the Romans, Saxons, and Danes for the freedom of their mountain-district.—Geoffrey of Monmouth, Lappenberg.

[3] Or Ederus, sometimes written Paternus or Padarn, Edern ap Padarn, or "with the crimson cloak."—Owen's Cam. Biog.

[4] The Wiccii, or people of Worcester, over whom Venutius had formerly reigned.

[5] Warrington. Gibbon. Pennant.

the majority were desirous of securing peace to the nation, by bestowing the Princess Helena on some noble Roman. Several members of the British senate dissented in favour of Conan Meriadec,[1] the king's nephew, who was present, whom they wished to become their ruler. Caradocus, Duke of Cornwall, son of Trahewrne, and cousin of St. Helena, gave his opinion in favour of Maximus, the Roman senator—a person not only allied to the imperial family, and educated in Rome, but his own cousin, being a son of Llewelyn, his father's brother, and equally related with himself to the royal family of Britain. This proposition met with general approbation, except from Conan, who himself aimed at the crown, and was much displeased at it: the matter, however, being arranged in favour of Maximus, Conan consented that Mauritius, his son, should become the ambassador of Eudda to the imperial court.

Accordingly, Maximus was duly informed by Mauritius of the intentions of King Eudda to honour him with the hand of the lovely Helena, with the reversion of the crown in perspective. The embassy met with an honourable reception at the court of Rome, where Mauritius was nobly entertained; and Maximus greatly pleased with the brilliant prospect that awaited him, undertook the journey into Britain.[2]

Flavius Clemens Maximus was born in a second marriage of Llewelyn, the brother of Coel, with a Roman lady. The place of his birth is differently stated: Spain, Rome, and Britain contend for the honour. His near relationship to the imperial family had caused him to be educated at the capital with great care,[3] and by his bravery he rendered himself worthy of the dis-

[1] Palgrave. [2] Polwhele's Cornwall. [3] Daniel.

tinction at which he eventually arrived.[1] The poets write of him as a robber-chief; but lofty talents he no doubt possessed. Long before Maximus was invited to Britain by Eudda, he had made that country his residence, having been called thither to repel the Picts and Scots: his noble conduct towards Cartandis, which has been named in her Life, gives a favourable view of his character.

At the time when the British embassy reached him, Maximus was contending with Gratian and Valentinian for a third share in the Roman Empire, which they had refused to accord him: his progress towards the island-home of his future wife was marked by the subjugation of several cities of the Franks, while his train was speedily augmented by a large number of followers. This popular chief arrived in safety at Southampton. But his expecting father-in-law regarded his martial array as having a hostile aspect, and, struck with sudden fear, ordered his nephew Conan immediately to raise an army to oppose his further progress.[2]

The tidings of the misunderstanding which had arisen in the mind of Eudda having reached the Roman prince, he consulted with Mauritius as to the course which it would be best for him to take. They determined to send twelve aged men, bearing olive-branches in their hands, to Conan. This embassy was admitted to a hearing, and it was stated that Maximus had come from the two Emperors of Rome on a visit, the object of which was peace and not war; when Conan and others persuaded Eudda to desist from his contemplated hostilities. After this, Maximus was conducted by Conan to London, where he had an interview with

[1] In Lluyd's Brev. of Brit. he is called "the Robber of Richborough."

[2] Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Eudda. Prior to their meeting, Caradocus and Mauritius had privately consulted with the King, when the former strongly urged the suit of Maximus, and ended with the following words: "Should you refuse him, what right could you plead to the crown of Britain against him; for he is the cousin of Constantine, and the nephew of King Coel, whose daughter Helena possessed the crown by an undeniable right?"[1] The King acquiesced, and the people, being uniformly in favour of the match, Maximus was promised the hand of Helena ap Eudda, and the rich inheritance she derived from her parents.[2]

The nuptial ceremony took place at Caernarvon, where Eudda resided, and held a royal court. There yet exists, in the Welsh language, a fabulous story relating to this circumstance, which is called "the Dream of Maximus."

Lady Charlotte Guest has devoted herself to the translation of this national composition, "The Dream of Maxen Wledig, or The Glorious," of which the following is an extract. That very interesting tradition, so poetically connected with the subject of this biography, is composed in these terms:—

"Maxen Wledig was Emperor of Rome, and he was a comelier man, and a better and a wiser, than any emperor that had been before him. While hunting one day, he fell asleep and had a dream, in the course of which he came to an island, the fairest island in the whole world; and he traversed the island from sea to sea, even to the farthest shore of the island: valleys he saw, and steeps and rocks of wondrous height, and rugged precipices; never yet saw he the like. And thence he beheld an island in the sea, facing this rugged

[1] Geoffrey of Monmouth.
[2] Roberts's Notes to British History.

land; and between him and this island was a country of which the plane was as large as the sea, the mountain as vast as the wood; and from the mountain he saw a river that flowed through the land, and fell into the sea. And at the mouth of the river he beheld a castle, the fairest that man ever saw; and the gate of the castle was open, and he went into the castle; and in the castle he saw a fair hall, of which the roof seemed to be all gold; the walls of the hall seemed to be entirely of glittering precious gems; the doors all seemed to be of gold; golden seats he saw in the hall, and silver tables; and on a seat opposite to him he beheld two auburn-haired youths playing at chess; he saw a silver board for the chess, and golden pieces thereon. The garments of the youths were of jet-black satin, and chaplets of ruddy gold bound their hair, whereon were sparkling jewels of great price, rubies and gems, alternately with imperial stones; buskins of new cordovan leather on their feet, fastened by slides of red gold.

"And beside a pillar in the hall he saw a hoary-headed man, in a chair of ivory, with the figures of two eagles of ruddy gold thereon; bracelets of gold were upon his arms, and many rings upon his hands, and a golden torque about his neck, and his hair was bound with a golden diadem. He was of powerful aspect; a chess-board of gold was before him, and a rod of gold and a steel file in his hand, and he was carving out chess-men.

"And he saw a maiden sitting before him in a chair of ruddy gold: not more easy than to gaze upon the sun when brightest, was it to look upon her by reason of her beauty. A vest of white silk was upon the maiden, with clasps of red gold at the breast; and a surcoat of gold tissue was upon her, and a frontlet of red gold upon her head, and rubies and gems were in

the frontlet, alternating with pearls and imperial stones; and a girdle of ruddy gold was around her. She was the fairest sight that man ever beheld.

"The maiden arose from her chair before him, and he threw his arms about the neck of the maiden, and they two sat down together in the chair of gold; and the chair was not less roomy for them both, than for the maiden alone. And as he had his arms about the maiden's neck, and his cheek by her cheek, behold, through the chafing of the dogs at their leashing, and the clashing of the shields as they struck against each other, and the beating together of the shafts of the spears,[1] and the neighing of the horses and their prancing, the Emperor awoke.

"And when he awoke, nor spirit nor existence was left him, because of the maiden whom he had seen in his sleep, for the love of the maiden pervaded his whole frame. Then his household spake unto him, 'Lord,' said they, 'is it not past the time for thee to take thy food?' Thereupon the Emperor mounted his palfrey, the saddest man that mortal ever saw, and went forth towards Rome.

"And thus he was during the space of a week. When they of the household went to drink wine and mead out of golden vessels, he went not with any of them; when they went to listen to songs and tales, he went not with them there; neither would he be persuaded to do anything but sleep. And as often as he slept, he beheld in his dreams the maiden he loved best; but, except when he slept, he saw nothing of her, for he knew not where in the world she was.

[1] When sleep had first come upon Maxen, "his attendants stood and set up their shields around him upon the shafts of their spears, to protect him from the sun, and they placed a gold enamelled shield under his head. And so Maxen slept." To this the passage above refers.

"At length Maxen sent for his wise men, and told them of his dream; and by their advice he sent messengers into different parts of the world, to discover the place and lady of whom he had dreamt. At the end of the year they returned without success, and he was very sorrowful. Then Maxen went to the spot where he had slept, and pointed it out himself. 'Behold, this is where I was when I saw the dream, and I went towards the source of the river westward.' On which thirteen messengers set forth on the track prescribed, and at last, in the great ship, they crossed the sea, and came to the island of Britain. And they traversed the island until they came to Snowdon. 'Behold,' said they, 'the rugged land that our master saw.' And they went forward until they saw Anglesey before them, and until they saw Arvon[1] likewise. 'Behold,' said they, 'the land our master saw in his sleep.' And they saw Aber Sain,[2] and a castle at the mouth of the river. The portal of the castle saw they open, and into the castle they went; and they saw a hall in the castle. Then said they, 'Behold the hall which he saw in his sleep.' They went into the hall, and they beheld two youths playing at chess, on the golden bench. And they beheld the hoary-headed man beside the pillar, in the ivory chair, carving chess-men. And they beheld the maiden sitting on a chair of ruddy gold. The messengers bent down upon their knees—'Empress of Rome, all hail!' 'Ha, gentles,' said the maiden, 'ye bear the seeming of honourable men, and the badge of envoys.[3] What mockery is this ye do me?' 'We mock thee not, lady; but the Emperor of Rome hath seen thee in his sleep, and he has neither life nor spirit

[1] Caern-arvon. [2] Segont.

[3] Each of them wore one sleeve on the front of his cap, as a sign he was a messenger, that no harm should be done him in passing through hostile lands.

left because of thee. Thou shalt have of us, therefore, the choice, lady,—whether thou wilt go with us and be made Empress of Rome, or that the Emperor come hither and take thee for his wife?' 'Ho! lords," said the maiden, 'I will not deny what ye say, neither will I believe it too well. If the Emperor loves me, let him come here to seek me.'

"And by day and night the messengers hied them back, and when their horses failed they bought other fresh ones. And when they came to Rome, they saluted the Emperor, and asked their boon, which was given them, according as they named it. 'We will be thy guides, lord,' said they, 'over sea and over land, to the place where is the woman whom best thou lovest;' for we know her name, and her kindred, and her race. And immediately the Emperor set forth with his army, and these men were his guides. Towards the island of Britain they went, over the sea and over the deep. And he conquered the island from Beli, the son of Monogan, and his sons, and drove them to the sea, and went forward even unto Arvon. And the Emperor knew the land when he saw it. And when he beheld the Castle of Aber Sain, 'Look yonder,' said he; 'there is the castle wherein I saw the damsel whom I best love;' and he went forward into the castle and into the hall, and there he saw Kynan, the son of Eudov, and Adeon, the son of Eudov, playing at chess. And he saw Eudov, the son of Cáradawc, sitting on a chair of ivory, carving chessmen. And the maiden whom he had beheld in his sleep, he saw sitting on a chair of gold. 'Empress of Rome,' said he, 'all hail!' and the Emperor threw his arms about her neck; and that night she became his bride.

"And the next day in the morning, the damsel asked her maiden-portion. And he told her to name what she would, and she asked to have the island of Britain

for her father, from the Channel to the Irish Sea, together with the three adjacent islands, to hold under the Empress of Rome; and to have three chief castles made for her, in whatever places she might choose on the island of Britain. And she chose to have the highest castle made at Arvon. And they brought thither earth from Rome, that it might be more healthful for the Emperor to sleep, and sit, and walk upon.[1] After that the two other castles were made for her, which were Caerlleon and Caermarthen.

"Then Helen bethought her to make high roads from one castle to another throughout the island of Britain. And the roads were made. And for this cause are they called the roads of Helen Luyddawc, that she was sprung from a native of this island, and the men of the island of Britain would not have made these great roads for any save her."[2]

Caernarvon, the scene of this romance, afterwards became celebrated as the birthplace of Edward II, the first Prince of Wales. The river Seiont, from which the place derived its ancient name, rises in the heart of Snowdonia, and forms the lakes of Llanberis in its passage, which rather inclines to the south-west, till it turns abruptly to the north to reach the sea beneath the mighty towers of Caernarvon. The ruins of Segontium are yet distinguishable on a planted hill near its exit, where the view of Caernarvon, with its castle and the coast of Anglesey, across a great arm of the sea, is hardly to be parallelled for beauty.[3] Near the steep bank of the river Seiont, at a small distance from the castle, is an ancient Roman fort. Near the corner of one of the walls, is a heap of stones,[4] the ruins of a

[1] Geoffrey of Monmouth; Carew's Cornwall.

[2] This great work was apparently the same as that commenced by St. Helen, the Empress.

[3] Skene's Rivers.

[4] Pennant.

tower, the foundation of which was accidentally discovered some years ago. This place seems intended to secure a landing-place from the Seiont at time of high water; and Pennant says: "I was informed that in Trer, Beblic, on the opposite shore, had been other ruins, the work of the same people." At a small distance above this, and about a quarter of a mile from the Menai, is the ancient Segontium, to the use of which the fort had been subservient. It forms an oblong, of very considerable extent, seemingly about six acres, placed on the summit of rising ground, and sloping down on every side. It is now divided by the public road; but in several parts are vestiges of walls; and in one place appears the remnant of a building made with tiles, and plastered with very hard and smooth mortar; this seems to have been part of a hypocaust. At present a public road passes through this station, beyond which the Romans had only a small outpost or two in this country.[1]

At Segontium the Empress Helena ap Eudda had a chapel of her own, of which the author of the "Mona Antiqua" assures us the remains were in existence in his days.[2] A well, near the fort, even now bears the name of the princess, and some very slight remains of ruins are to be seen adjacent, which tradition informs us is the spot upon which the chapel of the Empress stood.

A Triad has been preserved, which goes at some length into the expedition undertaken by "Kynan Meriadec and his sister Helen, surnamed Luyddawc,[3] or Helen of Mighty Hosts, the children of Euddav," for the purpose of supporting the claim of Maximus to the imperial throne. They raised an army of 60,000 men in Britain, and proceeded with it across the sea to

[1] Pennant's Wales. [2] Rowland's Mona Antiqua.
[3] Conan and Helen are here represented as brother and sister.

Armorica, A.D. 383: the desolation caused by this abstraction of its inhabitants from the island, is said to have been the remote cause of the Saxon invasion.[1] This is another version of the colonization of Bretagne, noticed previously.

The great reputation Maximus had acquired in Britain by his military successes against the Picts and Scots, had gained the affections of the people, whose predilection was still further confirmed by his marriage with Helena. From this time they identified their own views with his, and he was constrained to accept the purple in accordance with their wishes.[2] The accession of Maximus is placed in the year 383; he afterwards declared to St. Martin, that "he had accepted the Empire with regret, but that he was prepared to defend by the sword that diadem which had been bestowed by Heaven."

After his marriage, Maximus, with the flower of the British youth, who had rallied round his standard, had returned with his bride into Gaul,[3] where he established his court at Trèves, and in defiance of his imperial opponents, assumed to himself the dignity of an Emperor of Spain, Gaul, and Britain. Gildas remarks, that he "stretched out his wings" from the seat of his empire, "to Spain and to Italy," levying taxes on the barbarous nations by the mere terror of his name; and the moderation of the government of the Usurper, during whose reign not a single enemy or rebel perished, otherwise than in fair and open warfare, forcibly demonstrates the willing allegiance of the nations over whom he ruled.

St. Martin, who had, A.D. 374, been elected Bishop of Tours, and as an apostle, had diffused the light of

[1] Lady C. Guest's Notes to the Mabinogion.
[2] Palgrave.
[3] Warrington.

Christianity throughout Gaul, destroying all the temples of heathenism, was received with every mark of respect and honour by the Emperor Valentinian, then in that country.[1] When the holy bishop waited upon the Emperor at Trèves, Maximus made him sit at his table with the most illustrious persons of his court. He was placed at the right hand of the Emperor, who, in drinking, commanded his servants to give him a cup, that St. Martin might receive it again from him; but the bishop bestowed it in his turn on the priest who had accompanied him on his journey,—a holy boldness, which, far from displeasing, gained him the favour of the Emperor and of his whole court.

The wife of Maximus, the beautiful Helena, who now held the rank of Empress of the West, insisted on waiting upon the venerable priest whilst partaking of his scanty repast, as if she were of mean estate. Of this pious British woman, Sulpicius Severus writes thus, in his Dialogue on the Virtues of St. Martin: "By day, and by night, the Queen hung upon the words of Martin, and like her example in the Gospel, washed the holy man's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Martin, whom no woman had ever approached to touch, could not escape from her assiduities, or rather submission. She thought not of the wealth of a kingdom, the dignity of empire, the crown and the purple; nothing could remove her from the posture she had taken at his feet, till having asked her husband's consent, they together compelled Martin to accede to her request, that she herself, without the aid of servants, might be permitted to prepare him a banquet. The blessed man was reluctantly obliged to yield. The chaste preparations are made by the hands of the Queen, the seat is placed by her, the table drawn

[1] Ency. Brit.

to it, the water supplied by her own hands; she serves the food which she had cooked, and while he partakes sitting, she persists in placing herself on the floor at a distance, with the customary respect shown by servants, imitating their modesty and humility in all she does. Herself mixes the wine for him to drink, herself hands it to him; and supper being finished, she collects the fragments and crumbs of the bread which he had partaken of, rightly judging them, by the faith in her, to be more precious relics than an imperial banquet. Blessed woman! deserving to be compared in piety with her who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon—if we consider merely outward history; but if we compare the faith of the Queen, which we may do, apart from the majesty of the mystery contained in the Scripture narrative, the one came to *hear* the wise man, the other obtained grace, not only to *hear*, but to *serve*. * * * The Queen, on this occasion, ministered like Martha, and heard like Mary."[1]

St. Martin employed his influence with Maximus to

[1] St. Martin introduced the monastic system into Gaul, and his example was followed by his relative, St. Patrick, the Hibernian apostle. Martin resided in a cell made of twigs interwoven, and many of his disciples occupied caverns. No one had any property, or bought and sold, but all things were common. No art was exercised but writing, in which the juniors alone were occupied; the seniors devoting their time to prayer. They rarely left their cells, except to assemble at the place of prayer. They took their refection together, after the hour of fasting. None but the sick drank wine. St. Martin is frequently represented giving his cloak to a beggar, probably from having introduced the garb. Many of his followers were clothed with a stuff made of the *bristles of camels*, a softer habit being esteemed criminal. These habits were anciently worn by British monks also, as well as those of Gaul, and hats formed of the same. The *camblet* cloth of a later period was made of goats' wool.

The camels' or goats' hair shirt reached from the elbows to the knees: the hair material was worked into fine threads, and woven by weavers on purpose. One similar to them, belonging to

preserve the Priscellianists, who were persecuted by the clergy in Spain. The Bishop of Tours would hold no communion with men whose religious principles induced them to shed the blood of mankind; and he obtained the lives of those whose death they had solicited.[1]

Gratian,[2] then twenty-eight years of age, had made himself conspicuous by the protection of the Christians, for which he was hated by the whole heathen world, whose worship he intended to abolish utterly.[3] He was still contending for the Empire with Maximus, and sent Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, to him, to sue for a peace, to which Maximus seemed to incline, while in reality, he appears to have conspired against the life of his enemy. As this is the greatest blot on the character of the Christian Maximus, it appears worthy of particular detail.

Gratian had offended the veteran soldiers, by sending some Alans against Maximus, in preference to themselves, and numbers in consequence revolted to Maximus, who made them large promises of reward. This alarmed Gratian, who fled to Paris, whither Maximus, after defeating the Alans, pursued his imperial foe, and fixed his camp without the city. After five days, occupied in slight skirmishes, with no particular advantage on either side, first the Moors, and then the rest of the army, deserted to the side of Maximus, and Gratian, with three hundred horse only, made his escape to Lyons, other cities refusing him admittance.

Becket, was washed by his chaplain; they were commonly infested with vermin.

The feet and legs were usually bare; the Anglo-Saxons received their visitors by hospitably giving them water to wash their feet and hands, and wiping them with a towel.—Fosbrooke's Brit. Monachism.

[1] Ency. Brit.

[2] A burgher of a British municipal town.—Orosius.

[3] Echard.

Maximus, who aimed at his opponent's personal destruction, followed with his army, but not succeeding by force of arms, had recourse to the following stratagem.[1] He caused letters to be sent to Gratian, informing him that his wife was on her way to visit him. The unfortunate Prince crediting the information, repaired to the banks of the Rhone, which runs by the city, to meet her, believing her to be approaching, and overjoyed in the prospect of their meeting. When he opened the litter, and expected to clasp her in his embrace, he was treacherously murdered by Andragathius, an adherent of Maximus, who, with other ruffians, had been hired to assassinate him. By his death, Maximus became undisputed master of the Western Empire.[2]

This event has left a stain on the otherwise bright fame of the Emperor Maximus; so imperfect is the virtue of the greatest hero of those times.

Having rendered himself master of Gaul, Maximus colonized it with British soldiers, and next attempted to appease his envious rival Conan, who, jealous of his successful suit with Helena, and subsequent elevation to the Empire, had laid waste some of his territories in Britain. To silence this competitor, Maximus bestowed on him a portion of Gaul, called Armorica at that time, but after that date known under the name of Bretagne, or Little Britain.[3] This cession was made A.D. 384.

[1] Echard's History of Rome.

[2] Echard, Howel, Med. Hist. Angl. Palgrave.

[3] Dr. Lappenberg, in his "England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings," remarks on this subject: "This settlement has given a name, as well as a distinct character and history, to the province of Bretagne. Though that country had, from the earliest times, by descent, language, and Druidism, been related to Britain, yet the new colonists, who were followed by many others, both male and female, served unquestionably to bind more closely and preserve the connexion between Bretagne and the Britons of Cornwall and Wales; and but for this event, the heroic poetry of France and Germany had probably been without the charm cast over it by the traditions

Maximus, after this, sent an embassy to Cornwall, to demand from the King the hand of his daughter Ursula, for Conan; and the young Princess, and a numerous train of British females, many of whom were married women, quitted for ever the shores of their native country. Abundance of fables have been written of their number, the adventures that befel them, and the glorious death they encountered from the savage Huns.[1] They were martyred near the Lower Rhine, and buried at Cologne, where a tomb was erected over their remains, and a great church built on the spot.[2] This well-known edifice became celebrated to all time for the tomb of St. Ursula, and her "eleven thousand" holy companions. St. Ursula, "who was the mistress and guide to heaven of so many holy maidens, whom she animated to the heroic practice of virtue, conducted to the glorious crown of martyrdom, and presented spotless to Christ, is regarded as a model and patroness by those who undertake to train up youth in the sentiments and practice of piety and religion."[3]

The sisters of the order of St. Ursula are, in the Roman Communion, the instructresses of young females, and their establishments, those of Ursuline Sisters, are well known all over the continent.

In the poem we have before quoted, called "the Dream of Maxen," he is said to have spent seven years in Britain, "and after that returned to Rome, making many conquests by the way in the countries through which he passed. He laid siege to Rome, but had made no progress at the end of a year, when succours from Britain reached him. These were "the brothers

of the Sangraal, of Tristan and Iseult, and of Arthur and Merlin. But Britain was thereby deprived of her bravest warriors, and thence the more easily became an early prey to foreign invaders."

[1] Butler.

[2] A.D. 453.—Sigebert's Chronicle.

[3] Butler's Lives of Saints.

of Helen Luyddawc," with a small host of Britons, "and better warriors were in that small host than twice as many Romans."

"And Helen went to see the hosts, and she knew the standards of her brothers. Then came Kynan, the son of Eudav, and Adeon, the son of Eudav, to meet the Emperor. And the Emperor was glad because of them, and embraced them.

"Then they looked at the Romans as they attacked the city. Said Kynan to his brother, 'We will try to attack the city more expertly than this.' So they measured by night the height of the wall, and they sent their carpenters to the wood, and a ladder was made for every four men of their number. Now when these were ready, every day at mid-day the Emperors went to meat, and they ceased to fight on both sides till all had finished eating. And in the morning the men of Britain took their food, and they drank until they were invigorated. And while the two Emperors were at meat, the Britons came to the city, and placed their ladders against it, and forthwith they came in through the city.

"The new Emperor had not time to arm himself when they fell upon him, and slew him and many others with him. And three nights and three days were they subduing the men that were in the city and taking the castle. And others of them kept the city, lest any of the host of Maxen should come therein, until they had subjected all to their will.

"Then spake Maxen to Helen Luyddawc: 'I marvel, lady,' said he, 'that thy brothers have not conquered this city for me.' 'Lord Emperor,' she answered, 'the wisest youths in the world are my brothers. Go thou thither and ask the city of them, and if it be in their possession thou shalt have it gladly.' So the Emperor

and Helen went and demanded the city. And they told the Emperor that none had taken the city, and that none could give it him, but the men of the island of Britain. Then the gates of the city of Rome were opened, and the Emperor sat on the throne, and all the men of Rome submitted themselves unto him."

How far the Dream of Maximus is in accordance with the general facts of history it is difficult to say. There is no doubt that Maximus was one of the most heroic and successful of Roman emperors, and it is equally certain that Helena accompanied him in his wars abroad. Both Roman and British authorities concur in the narrative of his conquests and great enterprise.[1]

Helena had three sons by Maximus, of whom Victor was the chosen companion of his martial expeditions. Publicius, his brother, retiring from the world, assumed the religious habit, and to him the Mother Church of Segontium was dedicated. "It stands about half a mile south-east of the town, and from its royal patron, who was canonized at his death, bears the name of Llan Peblic, or Publicius."[2] This church and the chapel of Caernarvon were bestowed by King Richard II. upon the nuns of St. Mary's at Chester, on account of their poverty.

"The dress of Pabo post Prydain, called the 'Pillar of Britain,' as seen on his tomb, is a specimen of that worn by a royal priest in the time of Publicius. Pabo, who was contemporary with the sons of Helena, and the founder of Llan Pabo in Anglesey, is clad in a long dalmatic, partly opened at the sides, and bordered with fur. Round the neck and down the front, is a border of lace, richly studded with pearls. St. Jestin ap Geraint, a prince of the Devonshire Britons, who lived

[1] Palgrave [2] Pennant.

a century later than Pabo, is habited in a cope, fastened on the breast with a rich fibula; beneath this he has a short mantle or scapular over his tunic. This mode of dress was of the highest antiquity, and remained in vogue for royal personages till the time of Henry V. In his right hand the saint holds a staff, not unlike the augural staff of the ancients."[1]

The brilliant career of Maximus was destined to a sudden close. Valentinian, on being driven from Italy by Maximus, obtained assistance from Theodosius, Emperor of the East, who subdued his hitherto successful rival at Aquileia, A.D. 388. The inhabitants of the city seeing, or fancying they saw, despondency in his hitherto buoyant spirit, abandoned him in his first reverse, stripped the Emperor of his regal ornaments, and carried him bound to Theodosius. The generous Emperor would have pardoned him, but those who surrounded him, perceiving the clemency he designed to execute, hurried Maximus from his presence, and ordered his head to be cut off, even without the Emperor's mandate.[2]

Thus fell Maximus, the first to bear the name of Wledig, or "Illustrious,"—a surname equivalent to that of Emperor, afterwards borne by the Roman princes of his family in Britain: his dominions were annexed by Theodosius to his own, and afterwards transmitted to his son Honorius, who became Emperor of the West.[3]

Victor, son of Maximus, had been slain with his father at Aquileia, and some of his most dreaded relatives and friends were put to death as an example: the rest were pardoned; "so that," says the Chronicle,

[1] Smith and Meyrick's Costumes of Britain.
[2] Echard. [3] Warrington, Howel, and Daniel.

"under so merciful a conqueror, they felt not that they were conquered."[1]

The wife and daughters of Maximus seem to have been taken prisoners, probably at the surrender of Aquileia. Theodosius sent for them out of their confinement, settled an honourable pension upon them for their lives, and charged "a near kinsman of their own" to take care of their interests, and see that nobody oppressed them.[2] This statement differs from the one given in our national histories and traditions, from which it would appear that Helena was in Britain when Maximus died. The spot on which the Empress received the fatal tidings of the death of her husband and

[1] Such of these princes as were driven by the Saxons from their possessions embraced a religious life, and were ranked with the children of Bran and Brechan, under the appellation of "the three holy families of Britain." Theodoric,* son of Tethwald, King of Caermarthen in Wales, resigning his crown, settled as a hermit at a spot since known as Tintern. In that place, surrounded by rocks, he designed to pass the remnant of his days in solitude and peace; but the success of the Saxons compelled him to arm in defence of his country, and he was slain at Mathern, near Chepstow, by a mortal wound in the head. His body was buried on the spot where he fell, and Bishop Godwin saw his remains, which had been deposited in a stone coffin.† At a later period Tintern was a place of refuge for two other monarchs, who also left the spot to encounter a violent end: Kilwulf, King of Wessex, being dragged thence by his subjects, against his will, A.D. 610, to act once more as their leader; and Edward the Second, who fled there from the pursuit of his guilty queen, Isabella. Marcella, daughter of the slain hero, Theodoric, hermit of Tintern, named Olaf King of Ireland, became mother of Brechan, who inherited her estates in Wales; so that Caermardhin took from him its ancient name of Brechonia, or Breconia, in British Brechniock, in English Breknok:‡ thus an Irish historian remarks that, "Brecknock town and Brecknockshire have caused the glory of Ireland, that gave them the name of honour, which they hold to this day; and Ireland to glory of them, that gave their king's son, Marcella, their lady, and all that country in her right."§

[2] Echard.

* Owen's Cambrian Biography. † Stillingfleet and Powel.
‡ Powel; Girald. Camb. § Hanmer's Chronicle.

son, is still pointed out in Wales,[1] in the beautiful vale of Festiniog, where the springs called Fynnon Helen are supposed to have been derived from her tears.

One of the sons of Helen had entered the cloister, a second died a violent death abroad; for the third, Cunetha, it was reserved to transmit the honoured title of Wledig, with the maternal inheritance, to his children, among whom it was divided at his death. The original patrimony of Cunetha was in Cumberland and some neighbouring districts; and the Triads celebrate his praise, as being the first in this island who granted lands and privileges to the Church.[2] Wales was divided by Cunetha among his sons; and its several provinces yet bear the names of those early British princes: Cardigan, especially named as a part of their grandmother Helena's territory, was so called from Caredic, son of Cunetha.[3] Of the whole family, Eneon Urdd, or "the Honourable," was most distinguished. His son, Caswallon Caw Hir, or the "Long-Handed," fixed his royal abode in Mona in 443; and, as the eldest branch of the Cynethian family, received homage from the princes, his contemporaries.

[1] Girald. Camb. [2] Sir John Price.
[3] Owen's Cambrian Biography.

ROWENA.

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THE pressure of the Barbarians, those "many-nationed spoilers," had obliged the hitherto triumphant Romans to concentrate their attention and all their power in their own country, and, by degrees, they withdrew their forces from the remote provinces which owned their sway, until Britain was altogether abandoned by them, and left to the British princes, who were forced to carry on continual warfare with the savage Picts, and that people called the Scots of Ireland, settled on the west coast. The Saxons also came occasionally, to "fright the isle rom its propriety," by their incursions; and the endless quarrels of the chiefs for supremacy, plunged the whole land into such a

state of anarchy, that Vortigern, who then filled the uneasy throne of South Britain, may be excused, in his despair of establishing order, for forming the resolution of seeking protection and assistance from the powerful and restless German freebooters, whom he had hitherto looked upon as enemies.

In an evil hour for the freedom of his country, Vortigern summoned to his aid the unscrupulous adventurers, Hengist and Horsa, and Britain became their prey.

The loves of Vortigern and Rowena have become the property of the romancer, and some historians reject the traditions respecting them; but yet the story is as often repeated as omitted by chroniclers, and is by some attested as worthy of credit. There is a probability about it, which, while it interests, enlists the reader in its favour.

Nennius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and their followers, tell the story of Rowena's fatal charms, and she is named in the Welsh Triads as Ronwen. She was the daughter of the Jutish captain, Hengist, who, after he had successfully assisted Vortigern against his foes, had established himself and his party in the country: rejoicing to find themselves powerful chiefs, who were lately banished adventurers, expelled from their own shores.

When, at first, the Saxons stood before the King, says Roger of Wendover, he asked them respecting the faith and religion of their ancestors, on which Hengist replied: "We worship the gods of our fathers, Saturn, Jupiter, and the other deities, who govern the world, and especially Mercury, whom, in our tongue, we call Woden, and to whom our fathers dedicated the fourth day of the week, which, to this day, is called Woden's

Day. Next to him, we worship the most powerful goddess, Frea, to whom they dedicated the sixth day, which, after her, we call Friday." "I grieve much," said Vortigern, "for your belief, or rather, for your unbelief; but I am exceedingly rejoiced at your coming, which, whether brought about by God, or otherwise, is most opportune for my urgent necessities. For I am pressed by my enemies on every side; and if ye will share with me the toil of fighting, ye shall remain in my kingdom, where ye shall be had in honour, and enriched with lands and possessions." The Barbarians straightway assented, and having made league with him, remained at his court.

Hengist had received as the reward of his helping arm, from the grateful Vortigern, a fertile and commanding tract of land, on the Thames, called by the Britons, Ruoihin, and by the Saxons, Thanet. As soon as Hengist was fairly established, he sent for new allies to his native country, and his welcome summons was speedily answered by the arrival of a host of relations and friends, all greedy for gain. But the most attractive personage amongst these, and one on whose power the wily Jute most depended, was his beautiful daughter Rowena, celebrated, wherever she had been seen, for her surpassing loveliness and grace, "a prodigy of beauty, and the admiration of all men."

There is a tradition generally repeated, that Hengist's modest demand, on being requested by Vortigern to name the price of his services, was merely as much land as he could cover with a hide; this being of course granted, the cunning freebooter had it cut into thongs, and thus managed to procure a considerably larger share than was intended. However this may be, he became possessed of a great portion of the country, and built

or appropriated numerous castles, which he fortified, and where his followers established themselves.

It was at one of these, to which, it seems, he had given the name of Thong Castle, the situation of which is variously asserted (some chroniclers insisting on its being at Doncaster, others, that it was in Kent), that Hengist entertained the somewhat weak and luxurious Vortigern, and there, at a grand banquet, he introduced his fascinating daughter Rowena to the Prince.

In order to do the more honour to his guest, Hengist commanded the beautiful maiden to wait upon him during the repast, according to the fashion of the time, and Vortigern was not slow in taking the bait held out. At the first glance his eye had been dazzled by Rowena's beauty, and the smiling grace with which she presented him with a golden goblet, uttering, at the same time, in silver accents, the words of greeting—"Wæs heal, hlaford Cynyng," "*Health to thee, Lord King,*" entirely subdued him. From her lips he immediately learnt the customary answer, "Drinc heal," and his fate was sealed.

Drayton, after detailing this scene, goes on to say that the enamoured monarch—

> "Kuste hire[1] and fitte hire adoune, and glad dronk hire heil,
> And that was tho in this land the verst was-hail.
> As in langage of Saxoyne that me might ever iwrite,
> And so wel he paith the bole about, that he is not yet voryrte."

From that time "was-heil" and "drinc-heil" were the usual phrases of quaffing among the English, though

[1] Winsemius, the historian of Friesland, relates with much gravity as a fact, that *kissing* was unknown in England till the fair Rowena, Hengist's daughter, in the character of cupbearer, pressed the beaker with her lipkens, and saluted Vortigern with a kus-ên (a little kiss).*

* Sir R. Phillips.

Drayton thinks the custom had long before existed, both in Saxony and in other nations.

The dress of the Saxon ladies is thus described, and we may suppose Rowena appeared, on this memorable occasion, similarly attired:—"They wore linen, dyed of divers colours, under the gown, and to this part of the dress belonged those close sleeves seen under or within those of the upper garment. The gown frequently was embellished with bands of different colours, or embroidery about the knees and at the bottom. On their heads they wore a veil, coverchief, or hood, which, falling down upon the forehead, was carefully wrapped round the neck and shoulders; sometimes they wore over their shoulders a cloak, with a hole cut in the middle, for the purpose of passing the head through. Their shoes, commonly of black, were plain, and sometimes slit down the middle of the instep. The predominant colours for female dress were green, blue, and light red; sometimes pink and violet, but rarely perfect *white*."[1] Purple was worn only by kings and queens.

Hengist himself is represented as of "pleasing address, engaging and condescending behaviour, and of sound judgment."[2]

In "Smith and Meyrick's Costumes" he thus appears: "With a four-pointed helmet, like those worn in France in the ninth century, and a breast-plate precisely similar to those worn in that country in the reigns of Lothair and Charles the Bold; some say he wore 'scaly mail,' and surcoat of fur. The chieftain's spear was broad and heavy, his convex shield armed with a boss. His long red hair was worn flowing down: he was stout in person, and freckled. When unarmed, his head was adorned with a wreath of amber beads,

[1] Smith and Meyrick. [2] Rapin.

and round his neck was suspended a golden torque. His banner was red, and exhibited 'the picture of the white prancing steed,' at once the hieroglyphic of his name, and a symbol of the deity he worshipped."

As Hengist is said to be only about thirty at the time he arrived in Britain, his daughter Rowena must have been extremely young. At first, on Vortigern's declaring his passion for her, the artful father pretended to think her too lowly for so great an alliance: this assumed opposition, of course, increased the ardour of the royal lover, and his entreaties soon convinced both father and daughter that the objection was merely fanciful.

The object of the Jute was attained, and almost immediately the marriage of Vortigern and Rowena took place.

Vortigern had united himself previously to his marriage with Rowena, to a British lady of royal birth, by whom he had three sons, Vortimer, Categrin, and Pascentius, and one daughter.[1] This lady had been divorced to make way for the new marriage, and here the history of the Saxon invasion strongly resembles that of the Roman, four hundred years earlier. The divorced Queen of Vortigern may be compared to Boadicea, who was repudiated to make way for her husband to marry another: in these instances, as in that of the Spanish Florinda, the ill-treatment of a woman introduced the enemies of her country.

Vortigern's first wife was much loved by the people, more particularly because she was a Christian, while Rowena, her rival in the King's affections, was a lady

[1] The author of "Britannia after the Romans" thinks that Rowena was the Christian wife of a monarch who leaned strongly towards Druidism, and a queen most anxious to reconcile the British and Saxon tribes to each other. — Miss Lawrance's History of Woman.

of "uncowght beleue,"[1] in other words, a Pagan; moreover Vortigern had promised Rowena full liberty to exercise her own religion.[2]

As the rites of that religion are remarkable, a brief account of the idolatrous worship in which Rowena had been educated, may be excused.

The Saxon temples, in which their idols were worshipped,[3] were surrounded with inclosures, and it was considered profanation to throw a lance within the assigned boundary. The chief of the deities were the Sun and Moon, from whom, the former a female, and the latter a male deity, were named the two first days of their week. Tuesco, or Tiw, gave a name to the third day, but of him nothing is known. Wednesday was named from Woden, or Odin, the God of War, and renowned ancestor of Rowena herself, who is computed to have lived in the third century. Thor was another deity, and Friga, the wife of Woden, was venerated on Friday, as was Seterne on Saturday. There were besides Friga, several female deities, as Rheda and Eostre, to whom they sacrificed in March and April, Eostre giving name to the festival of Easter; and Herthus, or the Earth. There was a female power called an Elf, who appeared to have answered to Venus; Hera, the Goddess of Plenty, and Hilda, Goddess of War.[4] The offerings to these deities varied according to circumstances and seasons, consisting of cakes, of cattle, and sometimes even of human beings. The most celebrated and singular idol of the Saxons yet remains to be described. It stood at Marsburg, and bore the name of Irminsula. The edifice in which it was placed was spacious, elaborate, and magnificent, but had no roof. The idol itself, the largest in all

[1] Fabian. [2] Robinson. [3] Turner.
[4] Turner; History of the Anglo-Saxons.

Saxony, was constructed, it is thought, of wood, and represented an armed warrior; "its right hand held a banner, in which a red rose was conspicuous; its left presented a balance. The crest of its helmet was a cock; on its breast was engraven a bear, and the shield depending from its shoulders, exhibited a lion in a field full of flowers." Such was the extraordinary figure which was the principal object of adoration in the temple. Pictures of the Irminsula were to be found in other Saxon temples, which proves the high veneration with which it was regarded.

Both men and women served in the pagan temples of the Saxons; the former sacrificed, the latter divined and told fortunes. The priests, in the hour of battle, took their favourite image from its column, and carried it to the field, and after the conflict was over, the captives were immolated to the idol. There were certain days, also, on which the soldiery, clothed in armour, and brandishing an iron cestus, would ride round about their idol, and afterwards dismounting, kneel before it, and offer up prayers for success in their warfare.

The Irminsula was thrown down and broken, and the fame it had acquired destroyed by Charlemagne, in the year 772; its destruction occupied half the Gallic army three days, the rest being under arms; the vessels of the temple being appropriated, together with vast wealth, by the conquerors. The column on which the image had stood, being thrown into a waggon, was buried in the Weser, where it was found in the succeeding reign; and the Saxons attempting to rescue it, fought a battle on the spot called the Armensula. They were repulsed, and the image hastily thrown into the river; whence it was subsequently conveyed to the choir of a new church, built in the neighbourhood, at Hillesheim, and employed to hold lights at the festivals. After many

ages of neglect, its rust and discoloration were removed by Meibomius and a canon of the church.[1]

Such were some of the extravagances of the Pagan idol-worship, which was introduced into Britain at the marriage of Rowena, and being protected and patronised by Vortigern whose chief idol was Rowena herself, threatened to choke the scattered seeds of Christianity which had sprung up in different parts of the island.

The first coming of Hengist had been, no doubt, welcomed by the helpless Britons as a deliverance from threatened bondage; the increase of his possessions might not, perhaps, have awakened jealousy, had not the advancement of a foreigner and a pagan to the position of Queen-Consort, and the consequent divorce of their Christian country-woman alarmed them, and pointed out the necessity of expostulation. Whatever the British nobles might have felt at first, they dissembled their indignation, and the earliest intimation of their feelings which Vortigern received was a visit from Wodine or Vodinus, Bishop of London, a man of singularly devout and exemplary character. That priest, having learnt that the Queen had been dismissed by her husband, went to him and remonstrated freely with him on the subject, telling him how great a crime he had committed in dismissing his lawful wife, who was a good and virtuous woman and excellent Christian; he added, moreover, that he had deeply offended against the laws of God and man, by marrying a Saxon, who was an enemy to the Christian faith, and whose father was aiming at the crown of Britain, and resolved to subdue it to the thraldom of the Saxons. Vortigern, abashed by the Bishop's honest reproof, acknowledged his crime, prayed God might pardon him, and made a confession of his guilt to the holy man, full of penitence, auguring

[1] Turner.

well for the future. Upon this Hengist, who in an adjoining chamber had listened to all that had passed, came in with fury, and upbraided Vortigern for being so dejected after his marriage. To completely emancipate his son-in-law from such an adviser, he slew the Bishop and several other religious men who resided with the King, and would have killed his son Vortimer also, had he not saved his life by a precipitate flight.[1]

Vortigern was next excommunicated by St. Germanus and the whole synod of bishops, on account of his marriage with the heathen Princess Rowena.[2] His crimes and follies had rendered him so much an object of detestation among the people, that in the year 464 a General Assembly of the British States was convened by the nobles of London.[3] On this occasion Vortigern was upbraided as the author of all the country's calamities, and the crown being taken from his head was placed on that of his son Vortimer.[4] The deposed King was then sent as a prisoner into Wales, and Rowena, who had been also made captive, was confined in the Tower of London. The object of this severe treatment was to prevent any children of hers in future aspiring to the throne, to the exclusion of the issue of Vortigern's first wife; for Rowena, at the time of her imprisonment, was expecting to become a mother, and shortly after gave birth to a son.[5] This was a cruel reverse of fortune, but Rowena does not appear to have possessed acute feelings; beautiful as an angel as she is represented to have been, her character does not present us with any of the gentle virtues which adorn the sex, except, indeed, the persisting in a determination to adhere to the fortunes of her

[1] Weever, Scott. This scene is supposed to have taken place at Ambresbury in Wiltshire, and the great massacre of the Britons at Stonehenge, but antiquarians dispute on this point.

[2] Roger of Wendover.

[3] Warrington, Scott.

[4] Fordun.

[5] Roger of Wendover.

own family, which owed its aggrandisement to herself, may be considered as one of them.

Hengist, after learning the imprisonment of his daughter and her husband, had to arm himself against the united forces of the Picts, Scots, and Britons, who, headed by Vortimer, fought four battles; in one of which Horsa, on the side of the Saxons, and Categrin, brother of Vortimer, were slain fighting hand to hand,—a proof of the animosity which fired the rival chiefs.[1] Hengist, during the interval, spared neither age nor sex, burnt public and private edifices, slew the priests at the foot of their altars, and even nobles and bishops were sacrificed to his indignation.[2] In the end, however, fortune favoured Vortimer, and the Saxons, with Hengist, were forced to fly from the kingdom. During the six or seven years which followed, the British King employed himself in the restoration of Christianity, and rebuilt the churches which the Pagans had destroyed.[3] At the end of that time his life fell a sacrifice to the artifices of Rowena, who had bribed one of his attendants to poison him.[4]

Some of the best years of this dangerous beauty's life had been passed in prison,[5] but it would seem that this confinement was not very rigorous, owing to the generosity of the disposition of her step-son.

Rowena was anxious to recover her lost power, and reflecting what disasters Vortimer had caused the Saxons in England,—that she was herself a captive, her husband deposed and in prison, and her father a fugitive from his possessions, she determined to procure the death of the royal Vortimer. To this step she was led by her father's instigations, and, it is thought, with the connivance of her infatuated husband.

[1] Speed. [2] Hume. [3] Howel.
[4] Fordun, Brut. Tysilio, Howel. [5] Scott.

Rowena employed as her agent on this occasion a young man, attendant on Vortigern, whom she engaged in her service by the promise of a great reward. The event is thus recorded:[1]—"Disguised as a gardener, the Queen's emissary appeared one morning before the King, when he was taking the air in his garden, and presented him with a nosegay of flowers sprinkled with poison." As soon as Vortimer was sensible of its effects, and perceived that his death was inevitable, he called the nobility into his presence, and exhorted them to a manly defence of their country. He made it his last request that they should erect his sepulchre on the sea-shore, on the spot where the Saxons were accustomed to land. Some say that his tomb was prepared during his lifetime, at the entrance into Thanet, the scene of their last fatal struggle, in which Vortimer was the conqueror; and that the monument was called Lapis Titulo, in modern times "the Stoner."[2] However the King directed that his remains should be deposited therein, under the impression that the image and relics of a dead warrior would inspire the same terror he had infused when alive. For some reason not assigned, the Britons disregarded this request, and interred the heroic prince at Caer Ludd, or London.[3]

Perhaps some of the British nobles were prevented from complying with the last wishes of Vortimer, by the influence of Rowena, who no sooner found that her scheme had answered all her hopes, than she contrived, by flattery, to persuade the nobility to re-establish her husband upon the throne. This step was decided upon in a general council of state; and as soon as Vortigern

[1] Evans's Mirror of Past Ages, from an ancient MS.

[2] Warrington.

[3] The following authors are unanimous in believing Vortimer to have been poisoned:—Evans ("Mirror," p. 106); Verstegan, c. 6, p. 129; Fabian, p. 76; Matthew Westminster, p. 120.

was again made King, he sent into Germany, desiring Hengist to come over secretly, with a few attendants, lest if he came in any other manner, it might cause the Britons to rebel.—A.D. 461. The machinations of Rowena were thus far successful: her husband had recovered his crown; she was again a Queen; and her infant son, who had been born during her solitary sojourn in the Tower, was acknowledged the heir to the kingdom of Britain.[1] Under this promising aspect of affairs for the Saxons, Hengist was encouraged to set sail for Britain, with three thousand armed followers.[2] If the departure of her father had made Rowena "sad," as the historian informs us,[3] his return must have filled her heart with joy. Hengist now asserted his friendship for Vortigern, and his desire to support the claims of his own grandchild, the son of Rowena, whom he feared might be slain by the Britons, and who, Vortigern being aged and infirm, and unlikely to have more heirs, had the only claim to the throne.

The weak and superstitious Vortigern is said to have consulted Merlin as to the fate of himself and his son by Rowena, and received for answer that they should be burnt to death by Uther and Ambrose. These princes had a prior claim to Vortigern on the British throne. Their brother Constans, who had entered a monastery when a child, was, by Vortigern's contrivance, brought thence, on the death of Constantine, his royal father, to assume the crown.—A.D. 448.[4] Vortigern had afterwards caused him to be murdered, and seized on the vacant throne, to the prejudice of the junior princes, Uther and Ambrose, who, it was supposed,

[1] Warrington. Langhorne says that no children were born to Vortigern by Rowena.

[2] Fordun. [3] Tanner.

[4] Constantine, son of Solomon, King of Armorica, was elected and crowned at Silcestre, A.D. 433.—Geoffrey of Monmouth, Holinshed.

fled for safety into Bretagne.[1] This, however, was not the case, for Ambrose was detained in Britain by his mother; and is known afterwards as "Emris Wledig," or "Emperor," the title borne by his illustrious ancestor, Maximus: this was his Welsh title; the Roman one was Ambrose Aurelian.

After the departure of the Romans from Britain, many private Roman families had remained established here, forming a sort of clan of their own. The mother of Ambrose was one of these; her birth was very noble, for her parents were said to have worn the imperial purple,[2] but the name of her father has been purposely suppressed, though he is called a Roman chieftain, and of consular dignity. She is accused of having violated her vows as a vestal virgin.[3] This, however, seems to have been a fiction, invented by the enemies of the mother of Ambrose. Both herself and children had been educated by Guiteline, Archbishop of London; and Cirencester, the Roman city, is said to have been the scene of her espousals to their father Constantine.

On the death of Constans, her eldest son, this widowed[4] Queen, dreading that the cruel Vortigern should aim at the destruction of her other children, had lived in a state of complete seclusion. The young Ambrose gave such extraordinary evidence of his mathematical powers, that it was spread abroad as a rumour by the superstitious common people, that he was the offspring of a demon in human form, who had associated with his mother. The Queen, desiring to conceal the rank of his father, favoured the conceit, and thus

[1] Turner. [2] Bede. [3] Nennius.

[4] The emissaries of Vortigern, entering the bedchamber of young Constans, cut off his head, and carried it bleeding to Vortigern, who, feigning the utmost horror and astonishment, immediately ordered the deaths of the murderers! His next act was to assume the regal power.—Warrington.

the youth early obtained the name of Merlin, "the Magician."[1]

Vortigern had, by the advice of his nobles, determined to build an impregnable fortress in Snowdon, and collected the necessary materials to accomplish his design. To his surprise, these all disappeared in one night. On consulting with his wise men as to the cause, they told him the building would never stand unless it was sprinkled with the blood of a child who was born without a father. The country was searched far and wide, when a cluster of boys at play were overheard to charge one of their companions with being an "unbegotten knave." This child was the Merlin of whom we have been speaking, and who, with his mother, was instantly brought into the presence of the royal Vortigern, his greatest enemy. The Queen was forced to keep up her deceptive story, by owning the youth the offspring of the being of supernatural powers; and Merlin was sentenced to be sacrificed. In this cruel emergency, the wisdom of the boy was the means of saving his life. He confounded all the wise men of Vortigern by his questions; and having explained why Vortigern had failed in his erection of the castle, by founding it on a morass, had the good fortune to be set at liberty. Merlin obtained great reputation by the circumstance alluded to, and many prophecies were afterwards imputed to him, the repetition of which was forbidden, in after-days, by the Council of Trent.[2]

[1] Langhornii Chronicon.

[2] Pennant (from Nennius). "There were two Myrddins, or Merlins; one the minister and archbishop of Ambrosius, who succeeded Vortigern, and built Stonehenge, called Myrddin Ambrosius, and whose skill in bringing the stones from Ireland, obtained him the name of Enchanter; and the Myrddin, or Morvyn, a British poet and prophet, contemporary with Taliessin, who lived in the following century, and died in Bardsey."—Sir R. Phillips.

When Vortigern, desirous of learning his future destiny, and that of the son of Rowena, appealed to the royal prophet, he received the answer which sincerity alone could have dictated,—a quality for which Ambrose Aurelian was ever remarkable, and distinguished by it from his contemporary chieftains.[1] This excellent prince was afterwards leader of the Britons against the Saxons:[2] his valour is said to have been equal to his modesty, and the latter was conspicuous in so learned a prince. It is particularly stated that he was skilled in mathematics and astronomy;[3] and to him the town of Ambresbury, in Wiltshire, owed its origin.

The British nobles had, on the arrival of so many armed warriors, under Hengist, felt very indignant, and prepared for war. Rowena informed her father, as usual, of what was to be expected; who sent to Vortigern, offering to retain such only of his followers as the King pleased; but requested an interview on the subject. Thus, under the appearance of peace, he concealed the most artful scheme.

Vortigern is said to have accepted an invitation from Hengist to a banquet at Ambresbury, with about three hundred of his nobles; and on this occasion it was, that the whole of the followers of the British King were slain by the Saxons, and Vortigern himself detained a prisoner. Among those slain was Vodinus, who, at Vortimer's instigation, had formerly reproved Vortigern for divorcing his Queen, and marrying Rowena.[4] The haughty and insolent King, who is truly described as "neither wise in counsel, nor experienced in war," oppressed by the Saxons, and pursued by Aurelius, who took up arms after the death of

[1] Turner.
[2] Hume.
[3] Gibbon.
[4] Langhornii Chronicon.

Vortimer, fled for refuge into Wales, to a castle among the mountains of Carnarvonshire.

The Valley of Vortigern (Nant y Gyrthyrn) is described as an immense hollow, to approach which, says Pennant, "we ascend from Nefyn for a considerable way up the side of the high hill, and after a short ride on level ground, quit our horses. Fancy cannot frame a place more fit for a retreat from the knowledge of mankind, or more apt to inspire one with full hopes of security from any pursuit; embosomed in a lofty mountain, on both sides bounded by stony steeps, on which no vegetables appear, but the blasted heath and stunted gorse; the hind side exhibits a most tremendous front of black precipice, with the loftiest peak of the mountain Eist soaring above; and the only opening to this secluded spot is towards the sea, a northern aspect, where that chilling wind exerts all its fury, and half freezes, during winter, the few inhabitants."[1]

Nennius places the scene of Vortigern's retreat near the Teibi, in Cardiganshire; but (says Pennant) "I believe that the historian not only mistakes the spot, but even the manner of his death. His life had been profligate; the monks, therefore, were determined that he should not die the common death of all men, and accordingly made him perish with signal marks of the vengeance of Heaven." The guilty monarch was, it is said, destroyed in the castle wherein he had taken refuge, by lightning, together with the rest of the inmates; or else they were burnt to ashes, together with the structure itself, by the contrivance of the Britons.[2]

[1] The glen is tenanted by three families, who raise oats, and keep a few cattle, sheep, and goats, but seem to have great difficulty in getting their little produce to market.—Pennant.

[2] Howel.

Pennant proceeds thus with his description of the spot: "Just above the sea is a high and verdant natural mount, but the top and sides worked by art. The first flatted, the sides marked with eight prominent ribs from top to bottom. On this might have been the residence of the unfortunate Prince, of which time has destroyed every other vestige. Till the beginning of the last century, a tumulus, of stone within, and externally covered with turf, was to be seen here; it was known by the name of Bedd Gwrtheyrn. Tradition having regularly delivered down the report of this having been the place of Vortigern's interment, the inhabitants of the parish, perhaps instigated by their minister, Mr. Hugh Roberts, a person of curiosity, dug into the cairn, and found in it a stone coffin, containing the bones of a tall man.[1] This gives a degree of credibility to the tradition, especially as no other bones were found with it,—no other tumuli on the spot; a proof, at least, of respect to the rank of the person, and that the place was deserted after the death of the royal fugitive, about the year 465."

Rowena's history is little noticed after the seclusion of Vortigern. That she survived her husband, and still persevered in her feelings of resentment against the Britons, was believed, since she is accused of the death of Ambrose Aurelian, who is said to have been poisoned, in revenge for his share in her husband's death; "for she was very skilful in the art of poisoning."[2] Some writers, however, ascribe the deed to Pascentius, brother of Vortimer, who would be his rival for the crown; and a third account represents the philosopher King to have been slain in battle, fighting

[1] Kennett's Parochial Antiquities.

[2] Oliver Matthew's Abbreviation of divers most true and ancient Britannic Chronicles, &c.

against his Saxon foes, and states that Stonehenge was erected over the spot where his remains were deposited, or else to commemorate the slaughter of those noble Britons who were massacred by the Saxon Hengist.[1]

[1] Howel, Med. Hist. Ang.

GUENEVER I.

CONTENTS.

The beauty of the three Guenevers—Parentage of Arthur's first Queen—The Earl of Cornwall—Tintagel Castle described—Uther the Terrible, and his love for Igwerna—The Merlins—Gorolois and his wife—Uther marries the widow of Gorolois—Birth of Arthur—The Comet—Pendragon—Love of Arthur for his wife—She is carried off by the Duke of Somerset—Confined at Glastonbury—The Abbot obtains her release—She accompanies Arthur in an expedition against the Scots—First of the Twelve Battles—Guenever taken prisoner—She dies at Castle Dunbar—Tomb of Guenever and her maidens.

THE three Queens of Arthur the Great, the poetically-immortal adversary of the Saxons, were alike remarkable for their personal beauty, and for being honoured with the name of Guenever, most probably in addition to some other appellative, and in reference to their pre-eminent loveliness. That they were, as some writers have imagined, but one individual, is clearly an error; as not only does their history, on careful examination, connect itself with the three successive portions or epochs of the life of their warrior-lord, but their parentage was different, and the place of their interment dissimilar. In giving them a place among the Queens of England,

the opinion is followed of those authors who state that they were three separate princesses, bearing the name of Guenever, who, in turn, shared the regal honours as Queen-Consort.[1]

Every one of the many different readings of the word Guenever[2] has reference to beauty: it expresses "white as silver." A dazzling whiteness of skin, produced by the humidity of the climate, is said to have been a striking characteristic of woman in Britain at all times. "With her complexion ruddy, eyes blue, her hair long, and of a yellow colour, suffered to flow carelessly over the shoulders." The sex is described as "tall in stature, stately and dignified in manners, and in personal strength and vigour of mind so nearly approached to that of man, that softer sentiments often subsided, and made way for respect and awe."

High birth was intimated by the addition of Gwen, Vren, or Bren, to the name of any person. Eight Scottish monarchs bore the denomination of Eugenius, or Huganus,—the Owen, or Oeneus, of the Welsh, Evenus, or Eneas. The woman's name which corresponds is Gwenus;[2] the same as Venus, the goddess-mother of that hero Æneas, from whom the British kings, as late as Henry VII, pretended to derive their descent. We are expressly told that Arthur's first wife was so remarkably beautiful as to excel all the other ladies of Britain; on which account she was called Gwinne, "a word, in the Welsh tongue, signifying *fair*."

This beautiful Queen of the Britons was daughter of Corytus, or Gwryd Gwent;[3] though some go further

[1] Langhornii Chron., Lewis's Hist. of Great Britain.
[2] Camden.—See Life of Gwenissa, p. 92.
[3] Langhorne.

a-field, and say that her father was King of Biscay.[1] She was of Roman descent, and had been educated, up to the time of her marriage, by Cador, Duke of Cornwall, who was her near relative.[2] Arthur, having established peace, married "a fayre ladye, and a gentel, that Cador, the Earl of Cornwall, had long since nourished in his chamber." We are not exactly told that Guenever was crowned, but that she was "made Queen;" therefore she no doubt enjoyed the honours of being consort of Arthur.

Guenever, it seems, was brought up from infancy by Cador, Duke of Cornwall,[3] called "her near relative."

[1] Stowe.

[2] Biog. Brit. Caxton says she was his own cousin,—a fact corroborated by Stowe.

[3] Before Athelstan's time, the Earls of Cornwall retained the title of Duke or King; that monarch annexed it to his crown, but allowed the Duke or Earl the privilege of royal jurisdiction and crown right, the giving of liberty to send burgesses to Parliament, and appointing a sheriff, admiral, and other officers, which continued in the duchy till 1337, when the Parliament settled the duchy on the eldest son of the King of England, at the time when Edward the Black Prince was created Duke of Cornwall.

The eldest son of the King of England is born Duke of Cornwall, in respect to which he is of age at the very day of his birth, so as to claim living and seizing of the said dukedom. This, however, was first settled on the King's eldest son by Edward III; and it is to be observed that it does not descend by virtue of that monarch's grant to the heir of the crown of England in general, but to the son, and him the first-begotten son of the King. So Richard de Bourdeaux, son of the Black Prince, who died without coming to the crown, was not Duke of Cornwall by birth, but was created so by charter; nor was Henry VIII, after the death of his brother, Prince Arthur, Duke of Cornwall, because he was not the eldest-born son. Sir Walter Raleigh estimated the settled revenue of the Prince of Wales, arising from the mines in Cornwall, at 20,000*l.* sterling.

The Earls of Cornwall made Launceston Castle, Liskeard, Rostormel, and Moresk, at different times their place of abode; but since Edward III's time, when Trematon came into their possession, these residences ceased to be made use of, and fell into decay and ruin. The ancient British dialect was spoken in Cornwall till the time of Henry VIII, when the introduction of the English liturgy paved the way for its disuse. —Magna. Brit.

Cador was son of Gorolois, Duke or Earl of Cornwall, by Igwerna, the mother of King Arthur, and his "*own chamber*," or residence, was the famous Tintagel Castle, in Cornwall.

This castle, celebrated in romantic annals as the birth-place of Arthur himself, thus appears to have been the abode of his Queen during childhood. Carew describes the Castle of Tintagel thus :—"Half the buildings were raised on the continent, and the other half on an island, continued together, within man's remembrance, by a drawbridge, but now divorced, by the downefaln steepe cliffes on the farther side, which, though it shut out the sea from his wonted recourse, hath yet more strengthened the island; for in passing thither, you must first descend with a dangerous declyning, and then make a worse ascent, by a path, through his stickleness occasioning, and through his steepness threatening, the ruine of your life, with the falling of your foote. At the top, two or three terrifying steps give you entrance to the hill, which supplieth pasture for sheepe and couyes; upon the same I saw a decayed chappell. Under the island runs a cave, thorow which you may row at full sea, but not without a kind of horrour at the uncouthnesse of the place." Norden more particularly describes the island as being "by a very narrow, rockye, and wyndinge waye up the steepe sea-clyffe, under which the sea-waves wallow, and so assayle the foundation of the ile, as may astonish an unstable brayne to consider the perill, for the least slippe of the foote sendes the whole body into the devouring sea; and the worste of all is highest of all, nere the gate of entrance into the hill, where the offensive stones so exposed hang over the head, as while a man respecteth his footinge, he indaungers his head, and looking to save the head, indaungers the footinge. According to

the old proverbe, 'He must have eyes, that will scale Tintagel.'"[1]

Secluded and wild as was this spot, the rumour of the charms of the fair Igwerna, mistress of the castle, had spread far and wide, and had reached, among others, Uther Pen-Dragon, "the Terrible," the reigning Prince descendant of Asclepiodatus, the famed Duke of Cornwall, who was contemporary with St. Helena.

Uther, who had just become a widower, is said to have first beheld Igwerna, the greatest beauty of her time, at a banquet held in London. He sought, without success, to win her regard by every means his passion could suggest; but the lady fled from his importunities, and, with her husband, Gorolois, returned to Tintagel Castle, whither she was pursued by Uther in disguise. The magical skill of Merlin[2] was called to his aid, who

[1] Magna Brit. Norden says that most of the buildings were in ruins, but by the view annexed to his account, it appears that those on the mainland were standing in his time. Leland says: "Shepe now fede within the dungeon; the residews of the buildings of the castle be sore wetherbeten and yn ruine, but it hath bene a large thing."

[2] The names of two Merlins are given in the Ancient Triad, in conjunction with that of Taliesin, as the three principal bards of the isle of Britain:—

Merlin Ambrose.

Merlin, the son of Morfyn (Merlin Silvester, or Caledonicus).

And Taliessin, the chief of bards.*

Merlin Ambrose, or the Magician, already mentioned in the Life of Rowena, was a Druid of British or Welsh birth. Merlin Silvestris, born in Caledonia, also a celebrated Druid, lived about a century later, about 570, and dwelt in the city of Alcluid. The fact that Magi, or Druids, dwelt at the court of Brudi, who was converted and baptised by St. Columba, in 536, proves that the Order had not been so completely extirpated in Britain by the Romans as is generally supposed.† Rodarchus the Munificent, who reigned in Britain

* Taliesin, in the sixth century, wrote a poem on the Battle of the Trees, which is yet in existence; and in which he likens the words in the Ogham, or secret letters of the Welsh, to twigs or branches of trees. Mr. Darces seems to think that this is an allusion to the original system.

† Toland's History of the Druids.

pourtrayed to the lady, by means of a shadow which he raised on the wall, the form of one who was destined to be her future husband. Uther, at length, disguised as Gorolois, deceived the beautiful Igwerna,[1] and it is said that Arthur was the offspring of this deceit. Some attribute the story to the policy of Gorolois himself, who desired to conceal his wife's frailty or misfortune; but the fact that Uther was compelled to the artifice of representing her husband, attests the truth and loyal integrity of the deluded fair one.[2] Not long after Gorolois fell by the hand of Uther, and that prince immediately married his widow.[3]

The birth of Arthur took place at Tintagel Castle,[4] a few hours only before the death of Gorolois, the event being attended by the appearance of a comet, which Uther beheld at Winchester, and which prodigy was explained by Merlin, whom the King had sent for,

in the sixth century (A.D. 561), had two wives—one named Llangwrith, and the other Ganieda. Merlin the Prophet was brother of Ganieda: he had accompanied Feredarus, General of the Venedati, when he made war on Guenolous, the King, and so also had Rodarchus, his brother-in-law, and is thus noticed in Geoffrey of Monmouth:—"Lo! then comes another from the hall of Rodarchus, King of the Cambri, to meet the conqueror, who had married Ganieda, and was happy in a beautiful wife. She was the sister of Merlin. And Rodarchus orders garments, hawks, hounds, swift steeds, gold, shining gems, and goblets, which Guierlaudus had carved in the city Sigeni, to be brought, and presents and offers them one by one to the prophet." "We thus see," says Toland, translator of this passage, "that Merlin the Wild was no mean person. His sister Ganieda was nobly married, and he himself, for his vaticination, which was a prominent part of the Druidical office, received a present which might have suited an emperor."

[1] Thrale's Retrospections. The name of Igwerna, Arthur's mother, signifies an eel or serpent, and perhaps the famed banner of her husband had some allusion to the circumstance.

[2] Antiquities of Glastonbury; Fabian. Buchanan likens the tale to that of Jupiter and Alcmena.

[3] Biog. Brit.; Merlin's Prophecies.

[4] Geoff. of Monmouth.

to denote the birth of a son, who should arrive at great power; and also of a daughter, whose sons and grandsons should successively enjoy the kingdom of Britain.

At Tintagel Castle is yet shown the hall and the bed of King Arthur, his way to church, &c.; and in the neighbourhood everything grand, uncommon, or inexplicable, is attributed to him.[1] The author of the Legend of King Arthur says:—

"Of Brutus' blood, in Brittaine borne
King Arthur I am to name;
Through Christendome and Heathynesse,
Well knowne is my worthy fame.

"And in the Castle of Tintagill
King Uther mee begate,
Of Agyana[1] a beauteous ladye,
And come of hie estate."

Both Guenever and Arthur could lay claim to a Roman ancestry, in token of which Arthur bore the celebrated surname assumed first by his father Uther the Terrible—that of Pendragon, which, in the British tongue, signifies Dragon's Head. The prince to which this epithet was appropriated are spoken of by the poet as

"Pendragon Kings of Uther's royal race!"

Uther's famous ensign was the picture of a dragon with a golden head. The dragon, being considered an emblem of destruction, was depicted on the Roman standards of that epoch, and Uther, desirous of attaching the remnant of the Romans in Britain to his interests, adopted the fierce ensign to signify his descent from their emperors. The dragon had been displayed on the banners of Rome in an exhibition given to the people by the Emperor Gallien, and at the time of Uther, similar shows or spectacles were common throughout the remotest provinces of the Roman Empire; in

[1] Borlase, Hearne.

Britain they were patronized by Uther, and afterwards by his son, King Arthur.[1]. Cadwallader, their descendant, afterwards bore the red dragon on his banner, and Henry the Seventh, proud of his descent from the Roman line of princes, followed this example at the battle of Bosworth, which brought in the line of Tudor, the ancestors of Queen Victoria.

In spite of all this, the very existence of Arthur has been questioned, though the son of Henry the Seventh was named after him, and many ancient writers attest the truth of his history. At the time of Uther's death,[2]

[1] In the battle between Edmond Ironside and Canute, the Red Dragon of Wessex was unfurled. Henry III placed it as his standard in Westminster Abbey, prior to his visit there, and had it carried before him at the battle of Lewes; and Edward III also exhibited it at the famous field of Cressy.—Willemonte's Regal Heraldry.

This banner of Henry VII, which afterwards gave rise to the office of Rouge Dragon among the heralds, was of white and green silk, in imitation of the one Cadwallader had used in his wars, who had singularly enough believed that, at some future period, one of his posterity should wear the English crown. The dragon and the greyhound were the supports of the royal arms of Henry VII and Henry VIII: the former, as soon as he became king, having procured a true statement of his descent from Cadwallader.—Pennant.

Juliana Berners says that Arthur bore "three dragons, and over that another shield with three crowns."

Another national emblem, *the leek*, is said to have been first used at this epoch. In the days of King Arthur, St. David * won a great victory over the Saxons, having ordered every one of his soldiers to place a leek in his cap, for the sake of distinction; in memory whereof, the Welsh to this day wear a leek on the first of March." —Walpole.

"I like the leeke above all herbes and flowers;
When first we wore the same, the field was ours.
The leeke is white and greene, whereby is ment
That Britaines are both stout and eminent.
Next to the lion and the unicorn,
The leeke the fairest embleym that is worne."
Harleian MS., 1977.

[2] Uther is said to have died from drinking the water of a poisoned well.

* Uncle of Arthur. He was Archbishop of Menevia.

Arthur was only fifteen or eighteen years of age, and from that date, A.D. 516, he reigned for a period of twenty-six years; the people he ruled were the Silures, and he is termed King of Gwent,[1] then the British metropolis of the nation.

Guenever the Fair had no children by Arthur, who, however, is said to have "loved her wonder well and dearly."[2]

A strange event is on record as having called forth the affection and courage of Arthur in his wife's behalf. Melvasius, Duke of Somerset, had by stratagem succeeded in carrying off the Queen from her husband, and kept her confined during the space of a year, in a castle near Glastonbury. As soon as the brave and injured King discovered the place of Guenever's concealment, he hastily collected his friends in Cornwall and Devonshire, and besieged the disloyal prince. While, however, one party was assaulting the town, and the other defending it, the monks, headed by the Abbot of Glastonbury and Gildas Albanius, fearing the consequence of this intestine discord, entered into the midst of the contest, and persuaded Melvasius to restore Guenever to her husband. For their successful mediation on this occasion, the monks were rewarded by both parties with a gift of considerable territory.[3]

Guenever afterwards accompanied her husband in an expedition against the Scots. On this occasion Arthur fought the first of the twelve famous battles ascribed to him, which took place on the banks of the river Duglas, in Lennox:[4] he four times encountered his foes in the same locality. In one of these fierce struggles "20,000 Picts and Scots were slain on one side, and 30,000

[1] Dr. Borlase, Howel, Kippis, Buchanan, Hearne.
[2] Caxton.
[3] Langhorne's Chron.; Turner from Caradoc ap Llancarvon.
[4] Stowe.

Britons on the other;[1] so great was the slaughter, that the river was dyed with the blood of the slain, whose bodies were borne down its banks with the stream to the sea. Next day the British camp was rifled, and many rich spoils taken. Among the prisoners was Queen Guenever, wife of Arthur, with a great number of ladies, her attendants, and other gentlewomen. All the booty was divided by lot among the conquerors; the captive Queen and her maidens, with several noble prisoners, and much spoil, fell to the share of the Picts, by whom they were conveyed to Angus, and secured in the Castle of Dunbar, a place of great strength, where they remained in confinement the rest of their lives."[2] The ill-fated Queen did not long survive this sad stroke of fortune; she died at Castle

[1] Holinshed, by mistake, places this engagement in 542. He says it was fought on the banks of the Humber; and that in it both Arthur and Modred, his nephew, were killed.

Aspatria is a long straggling village, standing on the ridge of a hill. In removing the earth of a barrow which stood on a rising ground, called Beacon Hill, about two hundred yards north of the village, in the year 1790, a human skeleton was found in a sort of rude chest, or kistvaen, formed by two large cobble-stones at each side and one at each end. The skeleton measured seven feet from the head to the ancle-bone; the feet were decayed and rotted off, and the other bones soon mouldered on exposure to the air. On th left side, near the shoulder, was a broad sword, five feet in length, the guard of which was elegantly inlaid with flowers; on the right side lay a dirk, or dagger, one foot and a half in length; the handle appeared to have been studded with silver. Part of a gold fibula, or buckle; an ornament for the end of a belt, a piece of which adhered to it; a broken battle-axe; a bit, shaped like a modern snaffle; and part of a spur, were also discovered here. On the stones that enclosed the west side of the kistvaen, were various figures, rudely sculptured, but principally representing circles, having a cross within each relief. The learned antiquary, Hayman Rooke, Esq., from whose account these particulars are extracted, was induced to suppose, from the above emblematical delineations, that the person here deposited was interred soon after the dawning of Christianity; and also to infer, from the rich ornaments contained in his sepulchre, that he was a chieftain of considerable rank. This has been sometimes considered the tomb of Arthur.—Britton and Brayley.

[2] Scott.

Dunbar, and was buried in the fields of a town called Megle, in the county of Angus,[1] about ten miles from Dundee.[2] Arthur is said to have in person attended the funeral obsequies of Guenever, over whose remains a sumptuous tomb was afterwards erected.[3] The ladies who had shared her captivity were, at their death, interred in tombs placed around that of their Queen and mistress. The tombs of Guenever and her maidens were yet pointed out in the days of Holinshed, as that historian relates, and from him we learn that a story was current even then respecting the sepulchre of the Queen, viz., that if any woman should chance to tread upon it, she would remain barren as Guenever the Queen herself had been. "In consequence," says Langhorne,[4] "the women regard that monument of antiquity as a pestilent place, not even venturing so much as to look upon it, not only fearing the tradition for themselves, but teaching the same to their daughters, and bidding them also to beware of its influence."[5]

[1] Rapin. [2] Scott. [3] Scott.

[4] Langhorne places the death of Guenever I. in 511—the year in which Æscus, the Saxon King of Kent, died; but Arthur did not become king till 516, according to general history.

[5] Langhorne, Hector Boetius, Holinshed.

GUENEVER II.

CONTENTS.

Bridal festivities of Guenever, daughter of Uther ap Credawgal, at Carlisle—Arthur's Chamber—The Round Table—The Knights—The salt—The minstrels—Their accomplishments—The lady in her bower—The sweet key of Gwynedd—Customs at feasts—Grandeur of Arthur—Arthur a Christian—Arthur and Guenever in Brittany—The Fairy Morgana—The Coronation at Caerleon—Concourse of Kings—Guenever and the White Pigeon—Great ceremonies—Dubricius struck with the vanity of worldly grandeur—Retires to a cell—Arthur desires to be buried beside Guenever.

THE bridal festivities of the second Queen of Arthur, who bore the same name as her predecessor, that of Guenever,[1] were destined to form the theme of many a quaint and courtly ballad, familiarly known in modern times. This Guenever, who was daughter of Uther ap Credawgal, was united to Arthur at Carlisle, where might be seen, as late as the times immediately preceding the Conquest, an ancient building, situated near the Church of St. Cuthbert, denominated Arthur's Chamber, supposed to have been part of the mansion of the British monarch.[2] The following lines from

[1] Langhorne's Chron. [2] Britton and Brayley's Cumberland.

the ballad of the Marriage of Sir Gawain, allude to Guenever:—

"King Arthur he lives in merry Carleile,
And seemély is to see;
And there with him Queen Genever,
Yt bride so blithe of blee.

"And there with him, Queen Genever,
Yt bride so bright in bower;
And all his barons about him stoode,
Yt were both stiff and stoure.

. . . . .

"King Arthur welcomed them there right all,
And Genever, his queene,
With all the Knights of the Round Table,
Most seemély to be seene.".

The date of these second nuptials of Arthur is given as 511; the battle of Bannesdown Hill, which overlooks the vale of Bath, having been fought immediately before.[1] As this, the twelfth battle fought by Arthur against the Saxons, was crowned with victory, the King, desirous of commemorating the occasion, had established that famous order of knighthood whose members were designated Knights of the Round Table. The motto assigned to the order was characteristic of an ancient Briton: "Spread be my board, round as the horizon, and ample as my heart, that there may be no first or last; for odious is distinction, where merit is equal."[2] The number of these knights was limited to twenty-four, the King himself making the twenty-fifth.[3] Lothaire, husband of Queen Anna, Arthur's sister, was the first knight created by Arthur;[4] a great compliment to his brother-in-law, who is described as "a worthy prince, hardy, bounteous, manly, and right chivalrous." The creation of similar orders, on occasions of public rejoicing, had been customary from the earliest periods

[1] Langhorne, Howel, Camden, Stowe.
[2] Sir R. Phillips.
[3] Leland, Pennant.
[4] Harding.

of our history; and several cities, among which may be mentioned Windsor, have laid claim to being the scene of the earliest investiture of this order. At Winchester, which disputes the point with Windsor, there may yet, says Evans, be seen "King Arthur's Round Table,"[1] hanging in the great hall, where the Saxon kings were subsequently accustomed to hold their feasts; this hall is supported by marble pillars, and is in the King's House, on the west side of the city of Winchester. The table, which bears the name of the monarch, is formed of one solid piece of wood, round which are cut several names in the Saxon characters, though only one, that of Lancelot, is legible,—a knight who takes a prominent part in the history of Guenever, the third of Arthur's Queens.

At Penrith a large circle may still be seen, which, after the lapse of centuries, retains the name of King Arthur's Round Table. It is supposed that this monarch introduced the fashion of round tables afterwards into Gaul, as they became very prevalent in that country, where every knight had at *his back* a squire with his armour in waiting.[2] This royal military order seems to have cultivated music; for a tune, called the "Prelude of

[1] Evans's Notes to Old Ballads. When Edward the First conquered Wales, in 1284, he held a Round Table, and celebrated his victories with dance and tournament. The concourse of English nobles on the occasion was prodigious, and numerous foreigners likewise graced the assembly with their presence.—Pennant.

[2] Marie de France, an Anglo-Norman poetess of the thirteenth century, the contemporary of Henry the Third of England, whose famous "lays" are in the British Museum among the Harleian Collection, No. 978, has one, the fifth, called "The Lay of Lanval," a knight of King Arthur's Round Table, who, being falsely accused by the Queen of having insulted her beauty, is, by the orders of Arthur, tried for the offence at Cardiff, and delivered by a beneficent fairy, who conveys him to the isle of Avalon. There are in all 646 verses on the subject. M. le Grand has translated this lay into prose in his "Fabliaux." There is also an ancient English metrical version of it, by Thomas Chestre.—Hay's Biography.

the Salt,"[1] was always played whenever the salt-cellar was placed before King Arthur's Knights at his Round Table. The nuptials of Guenever II. were graced by many gaieties; not only were the knights of the Round Table established on the occasion, but not any of the ceremonies usually observed at the marriage of the ancient British princes were neglected.

No public festivity, great feast, or wedding, was duly solemnized in Wales, without the attendance of the bards and minstrels. There was one class of musicians, a member of which was especially appointed to attend on the nuptial festivity. This musician was required, to be a ready waiter at table, and also an expert carver of every species of fowl. At the weddings of any of the royal family, his office was to wait on the bride.

A picture in an ancient MS. of the British Museum, represents Arthur and his Queen at table in their royal robes, with their crowns, and surrounded by their attendants: in the front of the picture is a musician playing on what appears to be a *violin*, while a page, on bended knees, offers a cup of refreshing beverage, as the reward of his minstrelsy.

The court bard lodged with the governor of the palace: the Prince was accustomed to bestow on him an ivory chessboard; the Princess, a golden ring. If the Princess called for a song after retiring from table to her own apartment, this bard had to sing to her

[1] Salt was from the earliest times highly esteemed, and admitted into religious ceremonies. As a mark of league and friendship Jews, Greeks, and Romans held it sacred. Formerly, on Ascension Day, the old inhabitants of Nantwich piously sang a hymn of thanksgiving "for the blessing of the brine;" and Mr. Pennant, who thinks the custom of Saxon origin, says "that a very ancient pit there, called the 'Old Brine,' was also held in great veneration, and till within these few years, was annually, on that festival, bedecked with boughs, flowers, and garlands, and was encircled by a jovial band of young people, celebrating the day with song and dance."

highness in a low voice, lest he should disturb the performers in the hall. The subject was said to be on *Death* (not a very lively theme), but the word is probably misinterpreted, unless it was intended, like the skeleton at Egyptian feasts, to remind the lady of her mortality.

The marriage-fine of the bard's daughter was one hundred-and-twenty pence, her nuptial present thirty shillings, and her portion three pounds. The chief of the musicians was entitled to the marriage-fine for the daughters of all the inferior musicians or bards of the district, who paid twenty-four pence on their marriage; a proof of the antiquity and authority of this office.

The poets and minstrels contended for prizes of skill: at these Eisteddfods, or British Olympics, judges were appointed to decide on their respective merits. "Although it is probable these assemblies of bards were subjected to certain restrictions, there is no instance of such being the case before the days of Cadwallader, who died at Rome, A.D. 688. "Cadwallader, it is said, being at one of these assemblies, with his nobles, a minstrel came thither, who played in a key so displeasing, that he and all his brethren were prohibited, under a severe penalty, from ever playing on it any more; but were ordered to adopt that of Mwynen Gwynedd, or the sweet key of Gwynedd."[1]

There was another custom worth notice, which concerned the bards. The nuptial feast being concluded, a Pencerdd, or chief musician, was constituted Cyff Cler, and seated in a chair surrounded by the other bards standing, who made him the subject of their merry and ludicrous compositions, to raise mirth in the company. He was that day to make no reply, but on the next he was to divert the hall at the expense of the

[1] Pennant.

inferior bards, and was also to compose a poem upon a subject given him, suitable to his dignity.[1]

There were not many dishes used by the ancient Britons at their feast, nor various kinds of cookery. "They served up fish, the flesh of tame animals, wild-fowl and venison, either boiled, broiled or roasted. Tame fowl they never brought to table; ducks, hens, and geese were indeed reared for amusement, but their feelings were spared the sacrifice of beholding the favourite bird of yesterday a victim on the board of to-day. In their kitchens they used spits and earthern pots, platters formed of wood, earth, and even pewter, covered their tables. The knives and forks of the inmates or guests hung at their girdles, in the same case with the dagger, called by the ancient Scotsman, *Bidoc*. Side-tables were also provided, on which might be seen drinking-cups of wood, horn, and earth, one of silver usually being there also, and sometimes of shell. There was a distinction in the mode of placing themselves at the feast. The superiors or chiefs of the party occupied a table in the centre of the great hall, while their retainers sat upon benches raised but a little from the ground, and arranged in a circle around them; they were attended on by youth of both sexes. After eating, the chieftain called for a cup of wine or ale, and drank to the person who sat on his right hand, and the same cup being afterwards filled to the brim, was passed round the circle to each person in succession. Women not only had a place at the festive board, but were treated with much honour, and were accustomed to retire, as in more modern times, before the other sex indicated any symptoms of the effects of their potations."[2]

From many passages in Le Grand's Fabliaux, it appears that the custom of reclining on beds or couches

[1] Pennant's Wales. [2] Macpherson.

during meals still subsisted, and to eat on the same trencher or plate with any one was considered a great mark of friendship. At great entertainments, the guests were placed two and two, and only one plate was allotted to each pair. In the romance of Perceforest, it is said, "there were eight hundred knights all seated at table, and yet there was not one who had not a dame or damsel at his plate." In the romance of Lancelot du Lac, a lady whom her jealous husband had compelled to dine *in the kitchen*, complains "it is very long since any knight has eaten on the same plate with me."[1]

A peace of twelve years' duration followed the second nuptials of King Arthur. In this interval he acquired much renown by his splendour and magnificence, and foreign princes sought his friendship.[2] Norway and Denmark owned his supremacy, and Arthur sought to reduce Gaul, then a province of Rome. He laid siege to Paris, and reduced the city to such extremities that Flollo, the governor, offered to meet the King in single contest to decide the struggle, according to the chivalry of the day. In this encounter Flollo was slain, and Paris became the property of the British hero. Such is the account given by our ancient historians. Arthur, on this, established his court in France, and assumed for the royal coat of arms, quarterly, France and England. These arms,—afterwards to be seen in Glastonbury Abbey, on the head of which it was bestowed by the King, in divers panels of the wainscot of the abbot's apartment, and over the chimneys,—were "vert, a cross bottone, argent, in the first quarter our Blessed Lady, with our Saviour in her right arm, and a sceptre in her left, all or."[3]

That Arthur was a believer in the Christian faith, is evident from the fact of his making a cession of certain

[1] Notes to Le Grand's Fabliaux.
[2] Kippis, Biog. Brit. [3] Hearne's Antiquities of Glastonbury.

of his territories to the Saxon Prince Cerdic, on condition of his becoming a Christian.[1] Leland, who describes the seal of Arthur, which he had himself seen in the Church of Westminster,[2] declares that upon it the monarch appeared holding in his right hand a sceptre with a fleur-de-lis on the top, and in his left hand "orbem cruce insignitum,"[3] plainly inferring a sovereignty over both France and England.

The successes of Arthur have been described as so wondrous as to belong rather to fiction than history, and it has been doubted whether Arthur ever held any dominions in Gaul. However this may be, tradition that he had such a sway still lingers in Brittany, as a modern writer tells us, in describing a visit she paid to Caerduel, situate in the parish of Pleumeur Bodorr, "the lovers of romance will hardly think that labour lost which places them on a spot so celebrated in the chronicles of the period as the favourite residence of King Arthur. Here places and names surround us, with which the Romances of the Round Table have made us familiar, but to which fancy has assigned a locality in fairy-land, rather than in any veritable portion of the earth's surface. Here the half-fictitious personages whose adventures have in so many forms amused us, and the mystic performers of those deeds which have bequeathed to Europe an heroical literature of her own, have 'a local habitation and a name.'"[4] "Here it was," says M. de Fremenville, "that Arthur, surrounded by his noble peers, Lancelot, and Tristan, and Caradoc, and Yvain, and the rest, held a brilliant court, of which his wife, Guenarchan and the beautiful Brangwain were the ornament and pride."

[1] Dr. Borlase.

[2] Selden believed it a fact that Leland did see the seal here alluded to.

[3] Selden's Titles of Honour.

[4] Mrs. Trollope, in "A Summer in Brittany."

"It is certain, at least as certain as anything can be relating to a period so remote, and at best but semi-historic, that Arthur possessed dominions in Brittany as well as in Wales, during the early part of the sixth century. In the romances which celebrate his adventures, we find him as often in one country as the other."[1]

The reminiscences attached to Caerduel, are not the only ones in this neighbourhood which relate to King Arthur, if the antiquaries of this country may be believed. "There is, at no great distance from this spot, and just off the coast, a little isle called Agalon, or Avalon, and here, as the Bretons most jealously maintain, and not at Glastonbury, according to the more generally received tradition, was the tomb of the monarch. The well-known fable of his existence in fairy-land, and his return at some future period to rule again over his faithful Celts on either side the Channel, a tradition firmly believed by the peasants in some parts of Brittany to the present day, has been explained under the hypothesis of his having died in the Breton Avalon in this manner. The fairy Morgain, whose name ought to be written Morgwen, and means 'whiteness of the sea,' was a Druid priestess living in that island. It is known that these mysterious priestesses usually dwelt on the most wild and savage promontories of this rugged coast, or in the still more inaccessible islands which surround it. On that shore of the isle of Avalon which is opposite to the mainland, there are extensive quicksands; and the supporters of this explanation think, that Arthur's loss among these, upon some occasion when his love of the chase, or some other adventure, had taken him to this mysterious and sacred isle, was poetised into the story of the

[1] M. de Fremenville.

fairy Morgwen having detained him prisoner in her enchanted isle."[1]

Arthur had early distributed his possessions on the continent among his followers, and Normandy is said to have been allotted to Bedoer, his butler. During the nine years that France is said to have been the monarch's residence, he arranged everything for the preservation of tranquillity in his territories there. At length he returned to Britain, and considering some solemn demonstration of power necessary after so long an absence, he resolved to be again crowned, with every possible grandeur which such a great occasion could demonstrate. The feast of Pentecost was approaching, when King Arthur called together an assembly of his British subjects at Caerleon, in Monmouthshire, for this august ceremony to be performed.

The ancient city of Caerleon or Caergwent, is described by Giraldus Cambrensis, in his Itinerary through Wales in the year 1188, when he attended Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his journey there; the object of the prelate not being, as is generally supposed, the conversion of the Welsh to Christianity, which had been early established in their country, but that of preaching a crusade for the recovery of the Holy Land, which, by the dissensions of the Christian princes, had lately been lost. There can be no doubt that the description of Giraldus affords an accurate representation of the state of that place in the twelfth century.

"It is called Caerleon, the City of the Legions; for

[1] Mrs. Trollope. "From Kaerduel," continues the same author, "we walked to Penos Guirec, and there breakfasted, and then proceeded to Trecastel. It is a very remarkable line of coast, presenting, without any of the grandeur and sublimity of high cliffs, a scene of savage wildness and rugged barrenness which I have rarely seen equalled."

'Caer,' in the British language, signifies 'city' or 'castle,' and because the Roman legions which were sent into this island, were accustomed to winter in this place, it acquired the name of Caërleon. This city is of great antiquity and fame, and was strongly defended by the Romans with brick walls. Many remains of its ancient magnificence are still extant, such as splendid palaces, which once emulated, with their gilded roofs, the grandeur of Rome; for it was originally built by the Emperors, and adorned with stately edifices, immense baths, temples, and a theatre, the walls of which are still standing. Here we still see, both within and without the walls, subterraneous buildings, aqueducts, and vaulted caverns, and what appeared to me most remarkable, stoves so excellently contrived as to diffuse their heat through secret and unperceivable pores. The city is pleasantly situated on the banks of the navigable Usk, and surrounded with woods and pasture."

Among the ruins of Caerleon, various antiquities have been from time to time discovered, of many of which a catalogue was preserved by Camden and his continuator.

The views in the neighbourhood of Caergwent are extensive and fine, but the mighty Roman city has sunk down to a miserable village, the ruined walls of which, on the south and west side, alone remain to attest its former greatness. A modern traveller writes thus respecting this spot of ancient celebrity: "The Roman walls are still visible, but the facing stones have long since been removed for private uses. Near the centre of the field, adjoining to the west wall, is the theatre (or more properly the amphitheatre), mentioned by Giraldus. The form of it only remains, no traces of its walls being discoverable; the diameter of the

area is very large, and is bounded with a high circular entrenchment of earth. There is very little extant of the castle, which is of a later age; and the keep is remarkably lofty. Modern Caerleon contrasts in a melancholy manner with the grandeur of its ancient state, for it contains scarcely a single decent house!"

Not to modern Caerleon, but to that ancient Roman city which shone resplendent in art and grandeur, must the reader transport himself, to witness the second coronation of Arthur the Great, the supposed conqueror of Gaul, the hero of the ancient Britons, to whom nothing seemed impossible. The city was conveniently situated for the concourse whom the King had invited thither on this solemn occasion. Among the royal guests are named the Kings of Scotland, North and South Wales and of Cornwall, the Archbishops of London, York, and Caerleon, with many British princes, besides the Kings of Ireland, Iceland, Gothland, the Orkneys, and Norway.

So great was the splendour of this solemn festival that all the fronts of the houses are said to have been laid over with gold in honour of the occasion, after the custom of the Romans of that time. The British historian, who has handed down to us the particulars of the eventful ceremony, remarks, moreover, that "there never were assembled at any festival so many men and women of rank; so many steeds, hawks, and hounds; nor was there such a display of precious stones, golden vessels, and dresses of purple and fine linen, as there; for there was no one, even beyond Spain, desirous of distinction, who did not come to partake of the general satisfaction. There were also many who, uninvited, came to be spectators."[1] Arthur and Queen Guenever were invested with their crowns in the following manner:—

[1] Holinshed, Geoffrey of Monmouth.

"When the company was assembled, the three Archbishops were called upon to robe the King, and place the crown upon his head; and Dubricius (Archbishop of Caerleon) was appointed *to sing the sacred service.* Arthur, when he entered the church, was arrayed in his royal robes, and supported by the other two Archbishops; and before him went four persons, bearing each a drawn sword, this being his privilege as general. The four persons were—Arawn ap Cynfarch, King of Albany; Caswallon law hir, King of Gwynedd; Meyric, King of Dyfed; and Cador, Earl of Cornwall. As he went on, the conventual train, on all sides, sang the best poetical compositions to the sound of musical instruments."[1]

"The Queen also, on her part, entered the church after him," though, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth's account, she went to the other church, which agrees better with what is said of the populace running from one church to the other. "This, and some other minute circumstances, give to the author of this description the air of one who had been a spectator."[2]

Whether the ceremony was performed in one church, or at the two different edifices, it is needful here to pursue the narrative of Tysilio. Guenever, according to his description, "entered the church after her husband, dressed in her royal robes, her crown on her head, attended by bishops and nuns, and the four wives of the four above-mentioned chiefs, each bearing a white pigeon in her hand.[3] When she had entered the church, the service began, which had been composed and set to music in the best manner ever known; and the people ran from church to church to listen to the different services.

[1] Chron. Tysilio. [2] Rev. J. P. Roberts.

[3] This seems either to have been a part of the ancient ceremonial, or to have been an allusion to the feast of Pentecost.

"When the service was over, the King and Queen returned to the palace, changed their dresses, and entered the great hall to the banquet; Arthur and his attendants taking their place at one end of the hall, and at the other Gwenwhyfar, and the ladies in her train, as it was the custom for the Queen to do, when the King held a court, and had guests by invitation.

"When all the company were properly seated, Cei arose, and taking with him a thousand men, superintended the distribution and arrangement of the viands, as Bedwyr, comptroller of the cellar, with a thousand of his men, did those of the mead, which was served in vessels of gold and silver. All these had dresses of yellow ermine. Neither was the number or dress of those who waited on the Queen inferior to theirs who waited on Arthur.

"Hence it was that no court in Christendom could vie with that of Britain in customs or regulations. For all the men who attended on Arthur were in uniform, as were also their wives; and the ceremonial rules of behaviour were alike to all. And as no female, of any description, would admit the addresses of a man undistinguished by military excellence, the men were the more valorous, and the women more chaste.

"After the banquet, the company went out of the town to see a variety of games, and more especially the exercises with the lance; and whatever were the game devised, the walls were crowded with female spectators, each of whom recommended her favourite to notice, which caused the men to exert their abilities to the utmost. Prizes for the victors were also given by the Sovereign, at his own expense.[1]

[1] 'Some guests the while, as various likings sway,
With tables* or with chess beguile the day.'
The Knight and the Sword.—Breton Lays.

* Tables was a game resembling trictrac or backgammon. Both

"Thus the festival continued for three whole days, and on the fourth, those who attended it, were gratified by ample presents,—some by a grant of cities or castles and others by vacant bishopricks. And on this occasion Dubricius, Archbishop of Caerleon, retiring to live as a hermit, surrendered his see; for, considering how long a preparation had been made for a festival of three days only, and struck with the perishable nature of worldly enjoyments, he resolved to prepare for the eternal joys of heaven."[1]

The translator of the foregoing Chronicle of Tysilio remarks, that this sentiment attributed to Dubricius, whatever he might think of the mode he pursued, is finely impressive; for surely, if transient pleasures require so much preparation, those which are eternal demand one more serious.

Although in the midst of coronation festivities, here must we break off the records concerning Guenever, the second of Arthur's Queens, of whom nothing more has been handed down, than an account of the exhumation of her remains, which, at her death, were interred at Glastonbury. This lady was so much beloved by Arthur, that at his own death he requested to be interred by her side, a desire fulfilled with fidelity by his British subjects.

[1] Chronicle of Tysilio, translated by Rev. P. R. Roberts.

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chess and tables were mentioned by Robert of Gloucester, in describing King Arthur's coronation—"Wyth pleyinge at tables, other atte chekere."—Warton's History of English Poetry.

Chess, a favourite Asiatic game, was either introduced into Europe by the Saracens of Spain, or learned from the Greeks or Turks by the pilgrims in the Crusades.—Notes to the Fabliaux by M. le Grand.

GUENEVER III.

CONTENTS.

Guenever, daughter of Gogauranus—The sisters of Arthur—Curious story of Fedelmia and her friend—The children exchanged—The invasion—The "hag's" visit—Explanation and secresy—Change in the manners of Arthur and his Court owing to the Pictish Princess—The enchanted mantle—Queen Guenever's disgrace—Sir Cradocke's triumph—The Three Battle-knights of Britain—The Three Gift-Horses—The Three Chaste Women—The fatal horn—King Mark's Queen—Tristan and Iseult—Queen Guenever and Lancelot—King Arthur's Castle at Camelot—His Courts—The King's nephews—Schools for British youth—Arthur quits his Court—Mordred's conduct—Battle of Camelford—Morgwenna and her maidens—Arthur's death—Constantine's cruelty—Guenever retires to Caerleon—Interred there—Discovery of Arthur's tomb.

THE third and last Queen of Arthur, like the two former, was known by the name of Guenever; her father was a King of the Picts, of gigantic stature, called Gogauranus,[1] who had also two sons, Durstus and Garnardus, Kings of Pictland.[2] From this it would seem that the new bride of Arthur was daughter of the King to whom his sister Ada had been married. Anne[3] and Ada, both very beautiful princesses, the children of Uther Pendragon by Igwerna, were both married on the same day; Anne, the eldest,[4] to Lothaire, King of the Picts, and Ada, the youngest,

[1] Langhorne. [2] Ibid.
[3] Called by Langhorne, Arthur's "twin-sister," "gemella soror."
[4] Scott.

to Gabranus, or Goranus, who ruled over the Scots.[1] This double nuptial ceremony was performed at London,[2] and the princesses were given away by their uncle Aurelius Ambrosius. Goranus had been previously married to a lady named Ingeanach, of whom the following curious story is recorded, and which, as it seems much more likely that she was mother of Guenever III., than the Princess Ada, who was Arthur's own sister, is here given.

Eochaidh, or Eugenius, son of Eana Cinsalach, King of Leinster, had been banished from Ireland, by Niell, the monarch, and, with his consort, Fedelmia, sought an asylum in Scotland, with her friend Ingeanach, wife of Goranus, son of Domangard. Both ladies were on the point of becoming mothers, and being brought to bed on the same night, partly for convenience, and partly from regard to each other, had been lodged in the same apartment, no other person being admitted to their chamber but the female attendant whose presence was necessary on the occasion. Fedelmia brought forth two sons; Ingeanach only a daughter, and all her children being girls, she had passionately desired a son. This having also been the wish of her husband, whom she desired to please, Ingeanach besought her friend to substitute one of her sons for the daughter to whom she had given birth. The exchange was readily made, and the infant prince received with embraces of affection by Ingeanach. As soon as the Queen's attendants were admitted, and learnt that a prince had been born, they carried the happy tidings to Goranus, who, unsuspicious of any fraud, received the infant with the greatest endearments, named it Eugenius in honour of his friend, and treated it as his own.

On the death of Niell, Eugenius or Eochaidh, re-

[1] Carew, Kippis, Rowlands. [2] Holinshed.

turned into Ireland, and took possession of Leinster, his own patrimony, over which he ruled for many years. His wife and son, whom he sent for from Scotland, joined him there: the latter, who succeeded him on the throne, had received the name of Brandubh.

Meanwhile, Goranus had settled the succession upon his supposed son. At his death, Eugenius was, therefore, crowned King of the Scots without opposition. No sooner had he settled his affairs than he prepared for an invasion of Ireland, grounding his pretensions to that kingdom on his royal descent. He landed with his forces in Leinster, and commenced plundering the inhabitants. Brandubh, then king, perceiving how incompetent his forces were to contend with those of his enemy, gave himself up as lost; and his despair was augmented by the Scottish King's sending to demand of him a heavy tribute, under the penalty of spreading fire and sword through his dominions. At this critical juncture, his mother, Queen Fedelmia, who lived with him, volunteered to go in person to Eugenius, having a scheme of her own, by which she hoped to persuade him to retire out of the province. On her arrival at the Scottish camp, the Queen demanded an audience of the royal leader. So extraordinary a request led the King to imagine that the lady was distracted; but he nevertheless acceded to her petition. She then boldly expostulated with him upon the subject of his invasion, represented the cruel havoc he was making in Leinster, and bravely inquired what had provoked him to so barbarous and unwarrantable an undertaking. Eugenius, indignant at being thus called to account, replied roughly, that "it was not necessary for him to answer every *old hag* who should ask him questions;" and then ordered her to quit the camp. Whereupon Fedelmia told him "that his own mother was as much a hag as herself, as she

would soon convince him, if he would grant her a private audience, for she had a secret to disclose that was of the utmost importance to his interest." The King, who was all curiosity to hear what she had to say, having granted her request, Fedelmia thus addressed him: "Sir, I told you that your own mother was such a hag as myself, which is literally true; for I am your mother, and Brandubh, the King of Leinster, whom you seem resolved to drive out of Leinster, is your own brother; and to evince my honour and veracity upon this occasion, I beseech you to send instantly to your supposed mother, the Queen Dowager of Scotland, who, I am confident, will assert the truth, and confess that you are my son; only let me entreat you to cease hostilities and outrages upon the province until the messenger returns." The astonishment of the King was great at what had been revealed by Fedelmia, and so important did he consider the relation she had given him, that he instantly dispatched a messenger into Scotland to his mother, desiring she would come to him into Ireland with all possible haste, as her presence was absolutely necessary relative to the most tender circumstance which had occurred to him during his whole life. Queen Ingeanach complied with the request of her son, and on her landing in Ireland was conducted to the camp. The King of Scotland then acquainted her with the occasion of his message, and the surprising account he had heard from the Queen of Leinster, and desired she would satisfy him as to the truth of the discovery, and declare on her honour whether he was her son or not. The lady openly confessed the whole intrigue between herself and the Queen of Leinster, and convinced the King as to the fact of his birth, who desired that they would keep the matter secret, lest his right to the crown should be disputed, and an attempt be made to prevent

the succession of his family to the throne of Scotland; for if the tribe of the Dalriada were informed he was not the son of the deceased monarch, they would dispute his title, and disturb his government. The ladies bound themselves to secrecy; a peace was immediately made, and a strict friendship established with Brandubh, the King of Leinster; and Eugenius, withdrawing his forces from the island, returned into Scotland.

Very unlike was this Queen to her predecessors in character—for we read of Guenever II, that no court in Christendom was more remarkable for female purity than hers, where the men were brave, and the women free from reproach—and no sooner had Arthur become allied to this Pictish princess, than a change took place in the manners of the court; nor does the fame of Guenever III herself escape. Not only was Guenever unfaithful to her royal lord, but the brave Arthur, the hero of his times, who had been so tenderly attached to his two former Queens, followed the bad example of his present wife.

A story is related of an enchanted mantle, the property of which was, that none but a modest and pure woman could wear it. It was justly reckoned one of the greatest curiosities of Britain, and as such is frequently alluded to by the old Welsh bards.[1]

This extraordinary garment was brought to Carlisle, where the court was then staying: it was the third morning of May. "God speed thee, King Arthur," said the dwarf who exhibited this robe, the pattern and nature of which were rare to behold; "and God be with thy fair Queen Guenever. I have brought a curious article of female costume, well-shaped, and fair to look on, which I wish her majesty to try on; but it has one small fault,—it will neither keep shape nor

[1] Sir Henry Ellis.

colour a moment on any lady that hath done amiss." On this, all the knights in the court began to be in fear for their ladies; but not so Queen Guenever, who forthwith advancing, boldly seized the mantle, and threw it at once over her person, to make the first trial, when, lo! says the ballad—

"From top to toe it shiver'd down,
As though with sheers bestradde.

"One while it was too long,
Another while too short,
And wrinkled on her shoulders
In most unseemly sort.

"Now green, now red, it seemed,
Then all of sable hue;
'Beshrew me,' quoth King Arthur,
'I think thou be'st not true!'"

On which remark, the Queen indignantly casts down the mantle, with severe reproaches to her lord, saying, as she departs to her chamber—

"'I had rather live in desarts,
Beneath the greenwood tree,
Than here, base king, among thy groomes,
The sport of them and thee!'"

Sir Kaye next called on his lady to essay the wonderful garment: "Here, put on this mantle, if thou art innocent; but if thou art guilty, bide where thou art, come not near it." How did the knights laugh, and the ladies titter with mirth, when they beheld the mantle shrivel and shrink together! the lady cast it from her, and followed Guenever to her chamber. Another trial was made; but at the first touch, this sensitive garment shrunk up "to a tassel and a thread." At last, Sir Cradocke's lady made the attempt, and with complete success; for the magic robe fell into as elegant and decorous folds as any matron could desire. Queen Guenever, who, from her chamber beheld this, burst

forth into passionate exclamations of envy, and, coming down into the company, declared the mantle had been falsely won; she was thereupon reproved by the owner, who told the King freely, that she stood in need of chastisement, for her bold speech and too free carriage.

Warton was of opinion, that the ballad of "The Boy and the Mantle" was taken from an old French piece, entitled, "Le Court Mantel," quoted by M. de St. Palaye, in his "Mémoires sur l'ancienne Chevalerie:" the tale also resembles that of Ariosto's Enchanted Cup. The old stories possessed by other countries of King Arthur, were imported originally from Britain, according to Sir Henry Ellis. The currency of the story is a proof, at least, that there was no want of satire at Arthur's court, and probably no lack of matter for its exercise.

While the owner of the mantle was reproving Guenever, a wild boar ran by, which he seized, and having killed, laid the head down before the court, saying, "No man, whose wife has done him wrong, can carve that!" Several hid their knives, unwilling to risk the attempt; some others affected they had none; but all who did try failed, Sir Cradocke alone excepted. A golden horn was then produced by this ill-omened stranger, who filled it with wine. "Let any knight, whose wife hath erred, try to drink out of that." "It was spilt on the shoulder of one, on the knee of another, and in the eyes of a third;" nor could any drink a drop but Sir Cradocke, who won the horn and boar's head, while his dame carried off the magical garment, accompanied by the envy and acclamations of the whole court.

Cradocke, or Caradoc, was surnamed strong-armed. His warlike achievements obtained for him the dignities of a Knight of the Round Table, and he was made lord

of the "dolorous tower," destined for the confinement of state-prisoners. The Triads style him one of the *three* battle-knights of Britain; and Arthur himself called him the Pillar of Wales. His praises were celebrated by Aneurin Gwawdrydd, "the Monarch of the Bards," who flourished about 570, in his poem entitled, *Gododin:* and the Triads style his fleet war-horse Lluagor, "one of the *three* gift-horses of Britain." Caradoc, however, possessed a still greater treasure, as we have seen, in his wife, a princess whom the Triads notice as "one of the three chaste women of Britain;" who possessed three rarities, of which herself only was reputed worthy—her mantle, her golden goblet, and her knife."[1]

A horn, adorned with gold, is mentioned in the poem called "La Mort d'Arthur," possessing such virtue, that no lady untrue to her husband could drink out of it without spilling the wine; this enchanted horn had been sent to acquaint Arthur with Guenever's frailty, but was intercepted by King Mark, whose queen, with one hundred of her ladies, tried to drink out of it, and "only four could drink without spilling!" There is another characteristic story told of the Queen of Mark: these popular tales are almost all we have to guide us as to the habits of the day, and have therefore their value.

Many, indeed, is the fiction interwoven with the history of Arthur's time; and difficult is it to separate the true from the false. Caradoc and Tristram, and indeed, most of the knights whose achievements have been handed down in ballads to posterity, have left their names attached to numerous spots of legendary interest.

The famous legend of the Queen of Mark runs as follows:—

Morrough, one of Arthur's newly created knights,

[1] Le Grand's Fabliaux, *notes.*

brother of the Queen of Leinster, was sent by Anguish, or Angus, King of Ireland, into Cornwall, to demand of Mark, its king, a tribute won from him in single combat. Payment was refused, but Mark offered to meet the ambassador in single combat, to decide their strength of arms. Sir Tristram, or Tristan in the French romances, undertook the share of Mark in the engagement, in which he dealt so fierce a blow on his opponent's skull that, returning to Ireland, he died of the wound. Tristram himself was wounded by a spear, which had been poisoned, and he departed also for Ireland, to seek a cure in the country where the poison had been prepared. While at court there, his skilful performance on the harp made a great impression on all the household of King Anguish, and won for him the heart of the beautiful Isod, or Isolde, the monarch's daughter. Her love was returned; but as true love always finds a cross, the Queen, by private intelligence and other means, learnt that Sir Tristram was the person to whom her brother owed his death-wound; upon which discovery he was banished, not only from the court, but also from the kingdom. On his return, Mark was so interested by the recital of the charms of the Irish princess, that he dispatched Sir Tristram to Ireland again, as his own ambassador, to seek the hand of Isolde for himself. "La Belle Iseult," as French romances call her, returned with her former lover to Cornwall, where her marriage with Mark was celebrated with much joy and solemnity. But the renewed acquaintance of the lovers had revived the flame which should now have been extinguished. Again Sir Tristram sought to entertain his fair mistress with the sweet strains of his harp; and on one of these occasions he became a victim to the aroused jealousy of Mark, by whose hand he was slain; so that the historian remarks

"his love, which began with the harp, ended with the harp."[1] The father of Isod, who doated on her, had built for her, before she left Ireland, a castle upon the walls of Dublin, called Isod's or Isolde's Tower. It stood near "a void room called Preston's Inns, which, in those times, served as a place of recreation for the monarchs of the country;[2] and, not far from Dublin and from Isod's Tower, is a chapel with a village, named Chapel Isoud, which was afterwards built by King Anguish, 'in remembrance of his child, and for the good of her soul.'"[3]

The chronicles of the times abound with instances of Guenever's gaieties, and in the merry court of Arthur, filled with knights and chivalry, many strove to obtain the notice of the fair Pictish Queen, who presided over their assemblies. In the curious metrical romance, entitled "La Mort d'Arthur," the greatest part of the poem consists of the exploits of Sir Launcelot du Lake, King of Benwike, his amours with Guenever, and his refusal, for her sake, of the beautiful daughter of the Earl of Ascalot. At the conclusion of the tale, both Launcelot and Guenever assume the religious habit, in token of their repentance.[4]

It was usual for knights to wear the sleeve of their lady love or mistress upon their arms. Elayne, the fayre maiden of Aslotot, gave Sir Launcelot "a reed sleeve of scarlet, wel embroudred with grete perlys."[5] This love-token the gallant knight of the Round Table ventured to display at a tournay, which circumstance very seriously displeased his royal mistress, Queen Guenever, who, like other enamoured dames, could brook no rival. Nevertheless, Sir Launcelot's fidelity

[1] Dr. Hanmer, Caxton, Book of Houth.
[2] Holinshed.
[3] Dr. Hammer.
[4] Wharton's History of English Poetry.
[5] Art of Needlework.

to the Queen, though often tried in that fickle court, was so firm that legends tell of his having been visited by a fair love-sick damsel, who assuring him the Queen could not possibly be informed of his trespass, he chivalrously answered, "Though she should never know it, my heart, which is constantly near her, could not be ignorant." One of the four knaves or warlets of the French playing-cards bears the name of Lancelot, in memory of that valiant hero.

The circle which surrounded the King and Queen of this chivalrous time appears to have been more merry than moral, and extremely splendid.

> "King Arthur at Camelot kept his court royall,
> With his fayre quene, Dame Guenever the gay;
> And many bold barons sitting in hall,
> With ladies attired in purple and pall."

"Cadbury Castle, called by ancient topographers *Camalet*, was situated on the eastern side of the parochial church of Cadbury," at the northern extremity of a ridge of high hills, commanding an extensive prospect over Meadess and the Blackdown summits, in Devonshire. "Its form," says Mr. Collinson,[1] "is neither entirely circular nor square, but somewhat between both, conforming to the shape of the hill. Part of it seems to have been hewn out of the solid rock, and is defended by four ditches; and within is a still higher entrenchment, of a circular form, which was the citadel or *Prætorium*, but vulgarly called King Arthur's Palace."

The rampart is composed of stones, now overspread with earth, and has only one entrance from the east, which is guarded by six or seven ditches. The area contains upwards of thirty acres. Within it, and in the ditches, have been found, at different periods, many noble relics of the Roman Empire.[2]

[1] History of Somerset.
[2] Leland, Camden, Stowe, Selden.

This ancient fortification, which, by its name, signified "Tower of War," is called by Drayton, "King Arthur's Ancient Seat;" and many places there and in the neighbourhood bear the name of that British King. His Round Table, his Kitchen, his Well, have been transmitted to our times, and even a road across the fields, under the Castle, is known as King Arthur's Hunting Causeway.

The following lines of Drayton commemorate this ancient British seat:—

"Like Camelot what place was ever yet renowned?
Where, as at Caerleon, oft he kept the Table Round;
Most famous for the sports at Pentecost so long,
From whence all knightly deeds and brave achievements sprung."

According to the British Triads, the principal courts or palaces of Arthur were the following:—Caerleon, on the river Usk, in Wales; Celliwig, in Devon or Cornwall; and Penrhyn Rhionedd, in the north.

The feast which Arthur held at his coronation at the first of these places, is there also spoken of as one of "The three honourable feasts of the Isle of Britain."

Among the many distinguished characters who graced the court of the chivalrous Arthur, were Mordred and Gawainus, two of the King's nephews, the sons of Lothaire, by Anna, daughter of King Uther, "the Terrible." For the eldest of these princes the Queen is said to have entertained a very strong attachment. Both of them were natives of her own country, the land of the Picts; and though the admirers of Arthur have loaded the memory of Mordred, his destroyer, with every opprobrious reproach, the British Triads state that he was remarkable for his "gentleness, good nature, and agreeable conversation," and that it was "difficult to deny him any request."[1]

[1] Turner's Anglo-Saxons.

The manner in which these princes became associated with Arthur's nobles, was thus:—Their father, Lothaire, on the death of Uther, laid claim to the British crown on the score of Arthur's illegitimacy, he having married Anna, daughter of the deceased King,—a proof she was not Arthur's twin-sister, as Langhorne has asserted, but born after Igwerna's marriage. Finding this argument ineffectual, Lothaire united with the Saxons and Colgrim, who ruled in Northumberland, against Arthur. He was defeated, and afterwards entered into an alliance, by which it was stipulated that Lothaire should preserve peace with the Scots, and aid Arthur against his Saxon foes; the condition being that Arthur should enjoy the crown during his own life, but that when he died, it should descend to Mordred or his sons, if he had any.[1] This treaty had answered very well for Arthur at the time when it was made, after the death of his first Queen, who was childless, and when he had himself no prospect of issue. Nor had he any children by Guenever the Second, as far as history records; yet the third Guenever, the faulty Queen, became the mother of several. There were two sons, called Noe and Llechan.

According to the agreement of Arthur and Lothaire, Mordred, the eldest son of the latter, took up his abode at the court of Arthur, as his destined successor; and his brother, the young Gawaine, also accompanied him into Britain for the purposes of education: the name of Sir Gawaine figures prominently in many of the romances of this epoch.

In Arthur's time, there were many schools in England for the education of youth; every monastery, indeed, receiving pupils. Paulinus, the disciple of Germanus, resided in the Isle of Wight, where he

[1] Holinshed.

received pupils for education; and Dubricius, the Archbishop of Caerleon, had a school "in a place abounding with woods:"[1] to this last, perhaps, the young Pict was transferred. St. David, his great uncle, paid a visit to the establishment of Paulinus, who, we are told, used "to sup in the refectory, but had a scriptorium, or study, in his cell, being a famous scribe."

Lothaire, who had been the first-created knight of Arthur's Round Table, was afterwards appointed to rule over Norway and Denmark; and Gawain became ruler of Lothian, in Scotland, the patrimonial estate or inheritance, but tributary to his uncle, the King of the Britons;[2] while Thametes, his royal sister, becoming the mistress of Eugenius, King of Scots, had by him a son, St. Kentigern, afterwards Bishop of Glasgow, a prelate of royal blood, who became a great favourite of Brudeus, King of the Picts.

Morgwenna, or Anna,[3] sister of Arthur, after her husband's death, entered on the Druidical office of priestess, in one of the islands anciently so celebrated for those rites, upon the coast of France; later still, we trace her to Avalon, and find her attendant on the bed of her dying brother, King Arthur.

[1] Fosbrooke's British Monachism.

[2] Lothaire's dominions included all the lands about Pentland to the Forth, which were from him called Lothian. He was also rightful heir to the throne of Norway, being of the lineage of King Sichelm. The Norwegians had elected Riculf for their king; but Arthur, who had invaded Norway and Denmark, killed the usurper, and placed his brother-in-law upon the throne, who immediately resigned Lothian, in Scotland, to his son.—Harding, Brit. Bray.

Langhorne calls Lothus the ruler of Laudonia, and brother of Augusellus and Urianus.* It was Augusellus bore the sword at Arthur's coronation: we do not hear that Lothus was present on that occasion.

[3] Whether Morgwenna and Anna are the same admits of a doubt.

* Turner also says Lot was brother of Urien, and son of Cynfarch, and that Anna's marriage with him united the Kings of the Northern Britons in consanguinity with Arthur.

Arthur, finding it necessary to take up arms against the Romans, and to quit the country for that expedition, made the necessary arrangements for government during his absence. He accordingly declared publicly, that should anything happen to himself, Constantine, the son of Cador, Earl of Cornwall, a nobleman much loved by the people, was the person he desired to succeed his crown: by which it would seem that he did not consider Guenever's sons his heirs. During his temporary absence, Mordred was placed at the head of the government, as regent, and Arthur commended the Queen, his wife, to his protection.[1] This done, the King departed to battle with his enemies, little expecting what would transpire in his absence.

Mordred, who had always expected to succeed to Arthur's crown in the event of his death, was so much exasperated on learning that Constantine had been preferred to him and to his children, that he remonstrated with the King, and ventured to remind him, before his departure, of the agreement made formerly with his father.[2] King Lothaire was dead, and Arthur now made that an excuse for considering the agreement at an end; Mordred and his friends were accordingly silenced for a time, but no sooner was Arthur gone than Mordred began to endeavour to establish for himself the claim to what he conceived his rightful inheritance.

His designs, however, did not at first discover themselves openly. Perhaps Mordred would never have carried them to such lengths, had he not been secretly favoured by Queen Guenever, who was attached to him, and from the first had desired to promote his views, and those of her countrymen, the Picts.

[1] Biog. Brit., Robinson. [2] Buchanan.

When first Mordred had settled at the court of Arthur as heir-apparent to his crown, he had received the hand of the daughter of Gawolan, a British lord much esteemed by Arthur, and sister, as is supposed, of the historian Gildas.[1]

Although Mordred had formed this alliance, and had offspring by his wife, he is said to have encouraged the Queen's passion privately, while both conspired against his uncle's crown. He was not long in assembling a party in his favour, composed of Picts, Scots, and Bretons, and of their cabals Guenever was not ignorant, having, as we are told, been "too familiar with Mordred." To fortify himself still more strongly against his uncle, Mordred entered into an alliance with the Saxons under Ethelbert, the first King of Kent, who held his court in the town of Richborough, in the Isle of Thanet.

Arthur, meanwhile, had been apprised of the deep injuries which he had sustained, and leaving his nephew Hoel, King of Armorica, to pursue his affairs abroad, returned with all haste to Britain. He succeeded in landing in Kent, where, at Richborough, a bloody battle was fought, in which, though many of Arthur's friends were slain, Mordred was defeated and

[1] Opposite Uphill, in Somersetshire, is the lofty island of Steep Holmes—a vast rock, inaccessible except by two passages, the summit sandy and unfruitful, producing few shrubs or vegetables. In this solitary spot, Gildas Badonicus, the ancient British historian and philosopher, surnamed "the Wise," pursued his literary studies disturbed alone by the noisy sea-gulls, which build their nests amid the crevices of the rocks. Here, while the country was wasted with civil strife, was composed his celebrated work, "De excidie Britanniæ." But not even in this forlorn place of refuge did he long remain unmolested. A band of pirates, who had fled there to escape justice, settled in the island, and, by degrees, stripped the sage of the little he possessed, till, obliged to forsake the island, he betook himself to the Monastery of Glastonbury. He died about 570.—Collinson's History of Somerset.

forced to fly to Winchester, whither the King pursued him. He was again defeated by Arthur at that city, and forced to fly into Cornwall.

The final contest between the King and his nephew took place about a mile and a half from Camelford,[1] on the banks of the river Camblan, in Cornwall. Numbers fell on both sides during the engagement: the army of Mordred was totally routed, the Prince himself slain in the battle, while his brother Gawaine, who fought on the side of his patron the King, also lost his life. Arthur, mortally wounded, was conveyed from the field by his friends. His sister Morgwenna,[2] as recorded by all credible historians, with her attendant maidens, conveyed the dying King in a barge along the shore to the Usella, which they ascended, and committed him to the care of his friends at Glastonbury, in Avalon, Somersetshire. There, in the monastery, Arthur remained during the brief period which preceded his death, for his wounds proved mortal. Finding himself becoming hourly weaker, he resigned his crown to Constantine, the son of Cador, whom he had previously nominated his successor. Notwithstanding the tender care bestowed on the King by Morgwenna and her maidens, who were well versed in the female Druidical accomplishment of healing, Arthur died of his wounds, May 21st, A.D. 542.[3] Fearful that the news of his death would cast a damp over the Britons, and infuse courage into their Saxon foes, it was industriously circulated that Arthur was recovering; and Taliessin sang that Morgwenna had promised that if her brother remained a long time with her, she would cure

During this battle, in which Mordred was killed and Arthur mortally wounded, the sun is said to have been twice eclipsed!

[2] Called by romancers "The Fairy Morgana."

[3] Warner's Glastonbury.

his wounds; hence it happened that the return of Arthur was, for many ages after, one of the fondest hopes of the British people.[1]

As for Constantine, he was crowned by Arthur's subjects on the King resigning his crown, and this event was followed by the murder of the two young sons of his rival, Mordred, attributed by some authors to Constantine himself, though he had given them a promise of safety. This King is said to have cruelly slain the royal youths in the church with their two governors, even in the arms of their mother, to whose lap they flew for shelter, vainly beseeching her to protect them, nor could the intervention of the Abbot avail, who threw his cope over them, hoping that respect for his sacred robe would have withheld the murderers. Some attribute the deed to revenge for the death-wound of Arthur having been dealt by Mordred, others to a resolution to extinguish the race of Mordred, lest they should aspire to the regal power which they might justly claim from their grandmother, the sister of King Arthur.

On the dispersion of the clergy, Cuillog, the widow of Mordred, and her brothers, retired into Anglesey, where they built cloisters for religious purposes.[2] As Arthur had disinherited the young princes, sons of Cuillog, it is not surprising that their uncle Gildas, the British historian, omitted the name of King Arthur in his work, or that he spoke ill in it of Constantine, who was his nephews' murderer, besides using many angry expressions in his epistle.[3]

It was only for a short time that Constantine preserved his power: the Saxons effected a landing in Britain, and after sustaining a defeat from them, he fled to Wales with his wife and children, where for

[1] Turner.
[2] Holinshed, Milton.
[3] Rowland's Mona. Antiqua.

some years he maintained his royal state. On the death of his Queen, he became weary of the world, and retired secretly into Ireland, where he spent some time in ministering to the poor. At last, becoming known, Constantine was persuaded to resign his crown to his son, and profess himself a monk in the Monastery of St. David,[1] being a sincere convert to the Christian faith.[2] He was afterwards sent into Scotland by the bishop of his diocese, to instruct the people there in the faith, and while in that country suffered martyrdom, for which, many years after, he was canonized as a saint; and many Scottish churches, according to Holinshed, were, in his time standing, built by the bishops of that country, and dedicated in the name of St. Constantine.[3]

To return to Queen Guenever. At the time that Mordred was first put to flight by Arthur, she was residing at the city of York,[4] but tidings being brought to her, that Mordred was unable to defend himself against the King, "she was sore dread, and had great doubt, and wist not what was best all for to be done; for she wist well that her lord, King Arthur, would never of her have mercy for the great shame that she had him done; and took her away privily with four men, *without more*, and came to Caerleon, and there she dwelled all her life's time, and never was seen among folke her life living." She professed herself a nun in the Church of St. Julius the Martyr, at Caerleon;[4] and by the date discovered on her tombstone at Ambresbury, in Wiltshire, must have lived to a very advanced age. The monastery in which the Queen was buried, had been erected by Aurelius Ambrosius, Arthur's uncle, for the

[1] Butler, Holinshed.
[2] Old Welsh MS.
[3] Howel, however, declares that, at the end of a three years' reign, Constantine was slain by Conanus, and buried at Stonehenge.
[4] Caxton.

maintenance of three hundred monks, to pray for the souls of the British noblemen slain by Hengist. The Queen's tomb, says Rapin, was found there "within the last century."* This author, thought the circumstance of Guenever surviving her husband for fifty years, threw discredit on the fact, but as she was the third of his wives, and not long united to him, she might not have been thirty years of age at the time of the King's death.

The tomb of Guenever III was more costly than that of her husband. "On its coverture it had, in rude letters of massy gold, R.G., A.C. 600. The bones within this sepulchre were all firm, fair, yellow-coloured hair about the skull, and a piece of the *liver* about the size of a walnut, very dry and hard. Therein were found several royal habiliments, as jewels, veils, scarves, and the like, retaining, even till then, their proper colour; all which were afterwards very choicely kept in the collection of the Right Honourable the Earl of Hertford, and of the aforesaid gold, divers rings were made, and worn by his lordship's principal officers."[1]

Arthur's first consort reposed in Scotland; his second was interred at Glastonbury: to that monastery the King was conveyed after the fatal battle of Camelford, and the desire he had more than once fondly expressed, to be laid by the side of his second wife, was faithfully complied with by his friends; the funeral obsequies being managed by his sorrowing sister Morgwenna with the greatest privacy, for the reason already mentioned, although many British nobles attended the mournful ceremony.[2] The body of the

[1] Gough's Sepulchral Monuments. See Jones's Stonehenge restored, and Mr. Ray's Itinerary, 1662, who was shown her gravestone.

[2] Warner's Glastonbury.

King was placed sixteen feet deep under the ground, to prevent the Saxons offering any indignity to the royal remains, in the event of their discovering the grave, the knowledge of which was kept a profound secret.[1] Many other British monarchs were interred in this famous place of sepulture, amongst whom were Coel, Kentwin, Edward the Elder, and Edmond Ironside.[2] The illustrious dead, whose remains lay in mouldering state in this abbey, were buried under the body of the church in three large vaults, supported by two rows of strong massive pillars.

The body of Arthur was not discovered till 640 years after his death:[3] it took place in the reign of Henry II., A.D. 1172.[4] That King, at the time of the reduction of Ireland, "was passing through Wales, and at Pembroke was received with regal dignity by the Welsh, on which occasion one of their bards, playing upon the harp, sang to the King, whilst he was at dinner, of the exploits of the great Arthur, wishing him the prosperity and victory which had attended that monarch. In the ballad an allusion was made to the place of Arthur's burial, said to be between two pyramids in the holy churchyard at Glastonbury, many feet deep. On his return from Ireland, the King informed Henry de Blois, then Abbot of Glastonbury, of what he had learnt from the ballad of the bard, and desired him to dig and search for the bones of the great King."[5] The abbot did so, and, as some say, found these bones in the manner described by our historians,[6] among whom was Giraldus Cambrensis, who was an eye-witness of the fact. Some, however, say that this discovery was not made till 1189, after the accession of Richard I., when

[1] Warner's Glastonbury. [2] Willis's Abbeys. [3] Collinson.
[4] Warner. [5] Ibid. [6] Leland, Stowe.

Henry de Saliaco was abbot, who was created in the first year of Richard's reign. Mr. Hearne considers this more probable than that it took place under Henry de Blois, the brother of King Stephen.[1]

King Henry II. informed the Abbot that he had heard from the Welsh bards that Arthur lay buried between two pyramids, very deep. The monastery contained two stone pillars, with many inscriptions illegible from the injuries of time and the antiquity of the writing. The tallest of these was twenty-six feet high; the sculpture upon it could not be understood. Between these two pyramids "Arthur's body was found" buried, and marked in a hollow oak deep in the earth. There was found a cross of lead and a stone thereupon, and letters written within the cross turned towards the stone, which letters, says Higden, "I read and handled in this manner: 'Hic jacet sepultus inclytus rex Arturus cum Genevera uxore sua secunda in insula Avalonia,' *i. e.*, 'Here lieth buried the noble King Arthur, with his second wife Guenever, in Avalon.' The bones were laid in the grave, so that the two parts of the grave toward the head contained the man's bones, and the third part, towards the feet, contained the woman's bones. There the yellow tresses of the woman's hair were found whole and sound, with fresh colour;[2] but a monk touched the hair covetously with his hands, and anon it fell all into powder." The bones of Arthur himself are described as being of extraordinary size, and were identified by the ten wounds in his skull. The bodies of the King and Queen had been laid fifteen feet deep in the ground, as the "singer of gestis" had reported to the King, in the hope that they would not be discovered by the Saxons, and were marked, as before related, for

[1] Hearne's Glastonbury. [2] Sharon Turner,

their identity; and the discovery of them in this singular manner quite staggered the opinion held till then by the Welsh, that Arthur was still alive, and would return again to reign over his faithful people, and make them an independent nation.[1]

"After the spectators had gratified their curiosities, the abbot and his monks, with great satisfaction and reverence, took all the remains of the two bodies out of their separate coffins, and putting them into decent chests, made for the purpose, they deposited them first in a chapel, in the south alley of the church, till such time as a monument, suitable to the dignity of a king and queen, could be made for them, in the middle of the presbytery of the choir; where, in finishing the church, they erected a stately mausoleum of touchstone, nobly engraven on the outside, in which they placed the King's body by itself, at the head of the tomb, and the Queen's at his feet, being the east side of it." This inscription was then placed:—

"Hic jacet Arturus, flos Regum gloria regni,
Quem mores probitas commendant laude perenni."[2]

And over Queen Guenever's bones was the following inscription:—

"Arturi jacet hic conjux tumulata secunda,
Quæ meruit cœlos virtutum prole fecunda."

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[1] The poet thus records the popular belief:—

"But for he skaped y^t battel y^e wys,
Bretons and Cornych seyeth thus
That he levyth zut perde,
And schall come and be a king aye.
At Glastyngbury on the queer,
They made Arter's tombe ther,
And wrote with Latin vers thus:
Hic jacet Arturus, rex quondam, rexque futurus."*

Five different epitaphs are attributed to Arthur's tomb, an some Saxon poetry was written to his memory.—Collinson.

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* Chron. of Kings of England; Fabian.

The remains of the royal Arthur and his Queen were after this allowed to rest in peace until the year 1248, when, we are informed that King Edward I. and his wife Queen Eleanor, partly out of devotion, and partly out of curiosity, came to Glastonbury, "attended by many of the topping men of the nation, clergy as well as nobility;[1] where, upon the 19th of April, they caused King Arthur's tomb to be opened, and both the shrines to be taken out of the monument, which when the Court and its attendants had thoroughly viewed, King Edward opened the shrine wherein King Arthur's bones lay, and Queen Eleanor the chest wherein were those of Queen Guenever; and then each of them taking the respective bones out of their respective chests, they exposed them on two credences, on side-tables, near the high altar, till the next morning, for every one that had a mind to gratify their curiosity; and early the next morning, being the Wednesday before Easter, the King and Queen, with great honour and respect, wrapt up all the bones (excepting the two sculls, which were set up, and to remain in the treasury) in rich shrouds or mantles, and placing them again in their separate shrines, the King put into that of Arthur, an inscription setting forth what they were. And then the King and Queen fixing their royal signets to each chest, they caused the chests to be placed in the old mausoleum,[2]

[1] The King paid this visit in the sixth year of his reign, accompanied by Queen Eleanor, for the purpose of celebrating the feast of Easter, at his own expense, and was received with very great ceremony. The particulars of the royal visit, with the account of the second exhumation of the bodies of Arthur and Guenever (which took place on the Wednesday morning), are extracted from Mr. Eyston's "Little Monument," contained in the Appendix to Warner's History of Glastonbury.

[2] The abbot, Henry de Saliaco, is reported to be the author of the lines placed on his tomb.—Hearne.

Fabian places the translation of Arthur's remains into the new tomb in the year 1186; Biog. Brit. in 1189.

where they remained undisturbed about two hundred and fifty years, that is to say, till the dissolution of the abbey, in the days of King Henry VIII.; and "then this noble monument," saith Speed, "among the fatal overthrows of infinite more, was altogether rased at the dispose of some then in commission, whose over-hasty actions and too-forward zeal in their behalf hath left unto us the want of many truths, and cause to wist that some of their employments had been better spent."[1]

"At the same period of the dissolution of monasteries, was destroyed a little table, containing the story of the discovery of Arthur's tomb, and the leaden cross, with the inscription which had been set up in the monastery, and were seen by the great antiquary, Leland;[2] the cross, in particular, which had been placed there for exhibition, by command of the Abbot of Glastonbury, was regarded as one of the greatest curiosities of the abbey."[3]

[1] Appendix to Warner's Glastonbury, from Eyston's Little Monument, &c.

[2] Biog. Brit.

[3] Warner.

BERTHA.

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BERTHA is a Princess whose name cannot but excite peculiar interest, for her claims on the respect of posterity are no other than having first introduced Christianity amongst the princes of the Saxon Heptarchy.

She was the daughter of Caribert, King of Paris, by Ingoberga, his first Queen; and though some have supposed her their only child, she had two sisters, both of whom assumed the religious habit, one at Tours, the other at Poictiers. Notwithstanding Caribert was four times married, these three daughters were his only offspring; so that the kingdom, at his death,

devolved on his brother; the French laws not permitting the reign of a woman.

The father of Bertha is said to have been passionately fond of the chase, for which amusement the fair Ingoberga was too often neglected. The Queen, in her sorrow for this desertion, confided her trouble to two young girls, her attendants of honour: in an evil hour was this imprudent communication made.

One of these maidens had escaped from the distasteful retirement of a conventual life to the more attractive scenes of a court; the other, an accomplished dancer and singer, was gifted with rare personal beauty. At their artful suggestion, the Queen invented a novel amusement for her husband, in hopes of securing more of his society, on which occasion the talents of her companions were exhibited. The King's admiration, on witnessing the performance prepared for his enjoyment, passed all bounds; and the unhappy Ingoberga soon saw that her plan had but too well succeeded; the actresses in this scene were soon her declared rivals in her husband's affections. She was so indignant at the infidelity of Caribert, that she determined to mortify and humble him in return for the insult offered to herself. The father of these girls was a common wool-spinner, and Ingoberga, who was aware of the circumstance, ordered him to come to her palace, and follow his usual avocation of spinning. While he was thus employed, she took Caribert into her apartments to witness his labours. The stratagem so enraged the King, that he immediately expelled Ingoberga from the palace, and having divorced her, Miroflede, the eldest daughter of the wool-spinner, was elevated to the post she had enjoyed, both in his throne and heart.

The Queen sheltered herself in the seclusion of a convent under her misfortune, whither she was probably

accompanied by her children. She devoted herself to prayers and charitable deeds; and Gregory of Tours speaks of her as a woman of great wisdom, and constant practical piety, "unceasing in prayer, in mortification, and almsgiving;" besides which she set at liberty many persons suffering under the horrors of slavery.[1]

Under the superintendence of such a mother, the young Bertha had no doubt many advantages: she was possessed of great beauty and virtue, and so much esteemed for both, that even during the life of his father, the Saxon prince, Ethelbert, had made proposals for her hand. His overtures met, at first, with a decided refusal, on account of his religion; for not only Caribert and Ingoberga were Christians, but their daughter professed the same faith; while Ethelbert, and the Saxons, over whom he ruled, were pagans. Subsequently, Bertha consented to the match, on condition of being freely permitted to pursue the religious exercises in which she had been brought up,[2] and to enjoy the counsels of Luidhard, Bishop of Soissons (or Senlis): this request being accorded, she gave her hand to Ethelbert.

Ingoberga must have deeply felt the parting from her daughter, her two other children being separated from her; and her heart was still more wounded by the conduct of their father, whose affections, estranged from herself, had not long been retained captive by the insolent Miroflede, who had been supplanted by her younger sister.[3] The latter had not only procured her disgrace, but was promoted to her queenly dignity. The clergy, however, so strongly felt the disgrace the King brought on himself and the country, by marrying a nun

[1] Of this, Ingoberga is one of the earliest instances on record.
[2] Turner, Bede, Huntingdon.
[3] Anecdotes des Reines et Régentes de France.

who had broken her vows, and who was the sister of his former consort, that they excommunicated both Caribert and his wife: the former consoled himself in the society of a new favourite, but died soon after, in 670. Ingoberga survived the last of her rivals, and died A.D. 578, at the age of seventy, twenty-seven years after she had been deprived of the regal dignity.[1]

On the arrival of Bertha in Britain, she and her husband Ethelbert took up their residence at Canterbury. The young foreign Princess soon became very popular among the Saxons: her accomplishments won their hearts, and her irreproachable conduct their esteem: her beauty also pleaded powerfully in her favour with them. Bertha was exceedingly zealous for the propagation of her faith, and the earnestness she threw into her exertions for the good cause ensured success. She made use of every legitimate art which her address could employ, to reconcile Ethelbert to the principles of Christianity, and her exertions were at length successful. Pope Gregory the Great, for that end, had employed the zealous Augustine; but the honour of so great an enterprise as the bringing a whole nation from the darkness of paganism to the light of the Gospel, is mainly due to the influence of Bertha.

Besides Luidhard, several French chaplains attended on her, and an old temple, situated a little without the walls of Canterbury, had been assigned to her use for the performance of Christian worship.[2] Many persons about the court of Ethelbert, who soon after succeeded to the crown, were disposed in favour of the new faith by the exemplary conduct of Bertha and Luidhard.[3] Some were made at once converts, others were willing

[1] Mezeray, Hume, Anecdotes des Reines et Regentes, &c.
[2] Bower's History of the Popes; Butler's Lives of Saints.
[3] Butler, Bower, &c.

to become so: such being the state of affairs in Kent, Bertha, perceiving the harvest was plenteous, but the labourers few in number, made an application for help in her pious labours; first to the French, her own countrymen, and failing there, probably from the influence of her mother's rivals at court, appealed next to the Pope. Gregory the Great, the reigning Pontiff, was ambitious, on his own part, of shining in an undertaking so glorious as the conversion of Britain.

The Pontiff's feelings had first directed him to the enterprise, at the sight of some beautiful children exposed in the Roman slave-mart;[1] and, when, in answer to his inquiry whence they had come, he was told they were Angles: "Not Angles, but angels,[2] if converted," was his celebrated punning reply. The circumstance had fixed the desire on his mind; when, therefore, Bertha, "Queen of the Angles," and the daughter of Ingoberga, whose piety was known, and whose humane interest had so often set captives free, made an appeal to him on a subject which he had so warmly espoused, he lent a willing ear to her request.

Regarding her favour, protection, and influence, as happy omens for the success of a Christian mission, he deputed Augustine, a monk of Rheims, and forty other persons, among whom were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinian, to undertake a voyage to Britain, to accomplish the arduous enterprise.

It was a perilous undertaking, in the opinion of the

[1] Gregory is said to have written to Candidus, steward of the patrimony of St. Peter in France, to buy such English slaves as were to be sold in that country, under the age of seventeen or eighteen, and send them to Rome to be brought up in the monasteries. As they were pagans, the Pope desired they might be attended in their journey by a Presbyter to baptise them, should he find any of them in danger of dying on the road.* [2] Bede.

* Bower's History of the Popes.

Roman missionaries, who, before they had proceeded many miles, sent back Augustine to the Pope, with an entreaty that they might be excused from the office, and not be sent to a fierce and infidel nation, whose language they did not understand. Gregory would not admit their expostulations, and having written to that effect, exhorting them to persevere, they proceeded on their unwelcome expedition, taking with them French interpreters. They performed the voyage safely, and landed in the Isle of Thanet. On their arrival, they informed Ethelbert that they had come to offer him heaven and eternal happiness, in the knowledge of a God, with whom the Saxons were unacquainted.

Ethelbert, through Bertha's influence, received the messengers of Christ with hospitality, and at the end of a few days appointed a meeting with them in the Isle of Thanet. It was a Saxon superstition that spells were ineffectual in the open air, and on this account, it was arranged that the interview between Ethelbert and Augustine should not take place in any dwelling.

The procession of the Papal missionaries bore in its front a standard, on which was depicted a silver cross, with an image of our Saviour painted; as it advanced, litanies were chanted. Ethelbert's apprehensions were increased at the unusual spectacle; but the priestly train having taken seats by his command, the Gospel was preached and listened to with the utmost attention by the Kentish King.

Ethelbert was not immediately convinced of the truth of the new doctrine propounded; he, however, graciously replied to Augustine and his followers, of whose sincerity he was fully persuaded, promising that no opposition should be offered in his endeavours to obtain converts; but, on the other hand, that they should be

entertained during their stay in Britain. He accordingly ordered suitable provision to be made for their maintenance, and assigned for their abode a mansion in the city of Canterbury.[1] By their holiness of living and excellent precepts, the priests obtained, from that time, universal respect and subsistence through the beneficence of Ethelbert, and the patronage of such Saxons as were won over to their belief. They daily performed the services in the church, which was dedicated to St. Martin,[2] in presence of the Queen, who went thither to pray. This ancient edifice, still used for divine service, stands on the side of a hill rising on the left hand of the road leading to Deal, within half a mile of the city walls; the body of the church is built of Roman bricks, of an architecture prior to the Saxon invasion.

The learning, piety, and good example of the excellent Queen Bertha amply supported the Roman missionaries, in this their original condition, and her zeal and piety were eventually rewarded by the conversion, not only of the King, her husband, who was first to embrace the new faith, but of the whole nation, who followed the example of the throne. So much may be accomplished by individual exertions: in spite of a weak frame, a mighty and a powerful heart can achieve wonders; and thus had Bertha the glory of succeeding in her vast design of turning thousands from darkness and ignorance to the light and knowledge.

[1] Their lodging is said to have been in the parish of St. Alphege, in a place called Stablegate, which was then used as an oratorium by the King's household.*

[2] Augustine and his followers first met to sing, to pray, to say mass, and to baptise in St. Martin's Church, till, on Ethelbert becoming converted, they gained permission to build new and repair the old churches throughout his dominions.

* Thorne, Coxe, Roger of Wendover.

of the purest faith. The King was baptized on Whitsunday, A.D. 597, about a year after the arrival of Augustine.[1] Many others received the holy rite, unbiassed in their persuasion; for Ethelbert, though he now seconded the Papal emissaries, desired that nothing should be done by compulsion. The very ancient font which still exists in the Church of St. Martin, at Canterbury, is said to be the same that was used at the baptism of Ethelbert.

A small edifice of great antiquity, called St. Pancras Chapel, had been used by the Saxon King, prior to his conversion, as a private temple. It still stands to the east of the Hospital in Canterbury, and to the south-east of St. Augustine's Monastery. The materials and architecture are Roman, and it is only thirty feet long by twenty-one in breadth. St. Martin's Church is some distance to the east of St. Pancras.

The chapel of St. Pancras was afterwards purified by Augustine, and the idol placed in it was broken. The edifice was dedicated by the Roman bishop in the name of St. Pancras, a youth of fourteen, who suffered martyrdom under the reign of Dioclesian, in the persecution, A.D. 304. This was the first church dedicated by Augustine, and the altar in the southern porch, at which, after Ethelbert's conversion, he was accustomed to celebrate mass, still stands there; it occupies the spot on which had been placed a statue of the King.

Ethelbert was not contented with patronising Augustine and his followers; upon his conversion he resigned his palace in Canterbury for their use, and retired to Reculver, in the Isle of Thanet, where he erected a royal residence for himself and his successors.

According to Bede, there was already in existence, in the east part of Canterbury, when Augustine arrived,

[1] MS. Chronicles of Canterbury; Dugdale.

a building of about two or three hundred years old, which occupied the site of the present cathedral, and was the same as that given to the Roman missionaries. Augustine repaired and enlarged the edifice, dedicating it in the name of Christ.

In 938 this church had become little better than a ruin by the attacks of the Danes, the walls being uneven, and in some places broken down, and the roof in so threatening a condition it could not be entered with safety. The fabric was repaired by Archbishop Odo; but the roof he built was burnt by the Danes, 1011, and only the walls remained. Canute restored the edifice; but, after his time, it again fell to decay, so much so, that in 1070 Lanfranc was compelled to rebuild it almost from the foundation, though even then the ancient walls were not entirely thrown down.

Behind the choir of Canterbury Cathedral, in the chapel of the Holy Trinity, erected about A.D. 1184, in honour of St. Thomas à Becket, stands the ancient patriarchal chair, in which the archbishops are enthroned; and which, tradition records, was the regal seat of the Saxon Kings of Kent. It is formed of three pieces of grey marble, cut in panels; the under part being solid, like that of a seat cut out of a rock.

The under-croft, or crypt, over which the choir of Canterbury Cathedral is raised—undoubtedly the most ancient part of the building—is considered Saxon, and supposed to be that part of the old edifice left standing by Lanfranc. The walls are perfectly destitute of ornament, and everything presents the aspect of the most venerable antiquity. Of the pillars, some are round, others twisted, and neither in shafts nor capitals are there two of them alike. The circumference of most of the shafts is about four feet, and the height of shaft, plinth, and capital, only six feet and a half. From these

spring semicircular arches, making a vaulted roof of the height of fourteen feet.

The church architecture of the Saxons seems to have been of the Roman style, and an adaptation of the buildings found by them on their arrival here. The Britons had, shortly before the coming of the Saxons, besides their wattled and wooden churches, some stone edifices, like those of St. Martin and St. Pancras, at Canterbury, but not constructed in a style resembling the edifices which followed the doctrines of the supreme Pontiff. "They had no crypts under them for reliques; they were not supported by arches and columns; these arches and columns were not adorned with the images of saints and legendary stories; their shape was not cruciform; they had no oratories in the aisles, nor were they glazed. This was the *Roman style*, as precisely delineated by Bede, Eddius, Richard Prior of Hexham, and contradistinguished from the British."[1]

Before Augustine's time many Saxons had been converted by the Welsh and Irish clergy, but their native buildings were as mean as the British. After the arrival of the Roman missionaries, and the conversion of Ethelbert, it became fashionable to adopt whatever was connected with the Papal power, and to decry the native arts. At a later period the Saxon prelates were either educated at Rome, or attached to its doctrines, hence they patronized the Roman style of architecture in the edifices erected under their superintendence in Britain. Of this number were Ninian, who built the stone church at Whitherne[2] (Candida Casa) in Galloway; Benedict Biscop, founder of one at Weremouth; Naiton, who solicited Abbot Ceolred to send him architects to construct a church after the Roman fashion; and Wilfred, who built the church at Hexham, with others mentioned by Bede.

[1] Ledwich. [2] Lappenberg.

As the Saxons, at their coming to Britain, did not understand masonry, they had to send for foreigners to build their churches and monasteries. Thus the sculptures which adorn our capitals and arches, and are designated the Saxon ornaments and Saxon style, were not *invented*, but patronized by that people, and were as different as possible from the British forms of architecture, being derived from the more cultivated and polished Romans.

There had been established in Britain, long before the arrival of Hengist, a Roman architecture: while the same style as our Anglo-Saxon churches is found to prevail in the East, to the surprise of those who know that those buildings were erected prior to the arrival of the Saxons in Britain. All the principal churches in the East were, however, built by a British Queen, as related in the Life of St. Helena, to whom the Pope compared the pious Bertha, Queen of Ethelbert; and they, like the Anglo-Saxon churches, had a Roman origin. Helena was the greater part of her life in Britain, and her husband Constantius was a great architect, which facts simplify the whole matter.

The crypt or undercroft of Canterbury Cathedral, ascribed by Archdeacon Batteley to the believing Romans,[1] "remained unalterably the same amid all the conflagrations and repairs the cathedral underwent,"[2] and, singularly enough, the *capitals* of the columns, and the Egyptian hieroglyphical figures upon them, carry us back to the age of Constantine, "son of Helena," who had served in the Egyptian wars under Galerius. These figures are delineated by Ledwich in his interesting work.[3]

Bertha, anxious to promote the good cause, and spread

[1] Osborne says it was founded before A.D. 742. [2] Ledwich.

[3] Antiquities of Ireland (Observations on Saxon and Gothic Architecture).

No. 1 has on it the cat, adored in Egypt, and supposed to supply a

the Gospel to the farthest bounds of the kingdom, engaged some persons to come over to her from France to assist in the pious undertaking. Gregory, on his part, enjoined Augustine to remove the idols from the

cure against the bite of asps and other venomous animals: a symbol of Isis.

No. 2. An Egyptian grotesque—a hawk killing a serpent. The hawk worshipped in Egypt for freeing the country from snakes, scorpions, and other reptiles.

No. 3. An ideal quadruped, resembling the Egyptian gryphon, having the beak, talons, and wings of an eagle and body of a lion. The gryphon was sacred to Osiris. It is here represented killing some noxious bird or serpent.

No. 4. A gladiator or criminal engaged with a lion.

No. 5. A horseman with a cap and trowse.

No. 6. A sheep, to which the Egyptian paid divine honour.

No. 7. An equestrian figure.

No. 8 is a purely Egyptian figure—a double-headed Anubis bestriding a double-headed crocodile; Anubis being inseparably the companion of Isis.

No. 9. A man sitting on the head of another, holding in one hand a fish, and in the other a cup: an allusion to Isis.

No. 10. A double-headed monster.

No. 11. A bird destroying a crocodile, or some serpent of the lizard kind.

No. 12. A satyr resting on two deer.

No. 13. Two birds on a Roman masque.

No. 14. A grotesque, with the head and comb of a cock, the body and arms human, the shoulders winged, with the feet and tail of a satyr, playing on a violin with a bow; behind is a scalene triangle. Opposite is another grotesque, blowing a trumpet, with the head and horns of a goat, the lower extremities human. That these are Egyptian hieroglyphical figures is confirmed by various authors. The triangle denoted Orus, son of Isis and Osiris. From the figures on the capitals contained in the crypt, it was likely to have been an Iseum or Roman chapel, sacred to Isis, and an early imitation of Roman models. There seems little doubt that this building was erected long prior to the coming of the Saxons, by the Romans, most probably under Constantine. The grotesques exhibited on the capitals were mostly confined to crypts, and derived from the eccentricities of Egyptian superstition. Similar instances are to be seen in the vaults at Hexham, which, like Canterbury, was a Roman station; and in which may be found fragments of Roman inscriptions, grotesque figures, and much carved stone-work."*

* Porphyry, Tertullian, Montfaucon, Hutchinson.

heathen altars, but not to destroy the altars themselves; because the people held the spot sacred, and would therefore be more likely to carry on the Christian worship in its precincts. The people were in the habit of feasting at their pagan festivals, on the offerings of the altar, after they had been presented, together with their priests: the Pope desired Augustine not to encourage such entertainments among the converted Anglo-Saxons. By his order Augustine visited France, and was ordained Archbishop of the English by the Archbishop of Arles. After he returned, he sent a deputation to Rome, to inform the Pope of the success of his mission, and to request the solution of some theological questions. An embassy from Gregory brought back the answers required, with instructions to the priests to exert themselves in the diffusion of the light of the Gospel; they brought over vessels and vestments for the altar, copes, relics, &c., with a letter and presents to King Ethelbert. The Pope's letter to the Anglo-Saxon monarch, bears date the 10th day of the Calends of June, A.D. 601,[1] and may be seen in Bede, or in the History of Radulf de Diceto: the one here transcribed is from the latter:

"*Pope Gregory to Ethelbert, King of the Angles.*

"Glorious son, guard with solicitude the faith which thou hast divinely received. Hasten to spread the Christian faith among the peoples subject to thee; multiply the zeal of thy rectitude in their conversion; pursue the worship of idols, and destroy their temples. For God himself will render the name of your glory even more glorious to posterity, seeking, as you do His honour among nations saved. So it was that Constantine, the most pious Emperor, reclaimed

[1] Bede.

the Roman state from the profane worship of idols, and subjected it to Almighty God. And thus it came to pass, that this man vanquished by his praises the fame of the ancient princes, and surpassed his predecessors by continued well-doing."

"*Pope Gregory to Bertha, Queen of the Angles.*

"We bless Almighty God, who hath graciously vouchsafed to reserve for your reward the conversion of the people of the Angles. For, as through the memorable Helena, the mother of the most pious Constantine, Emperor of the Romans, the hearts of the Romans were kindled to the Christian faith; so, by the zeal of your glory, we are confident the mercy of God is operating among the people of the Angles."

"*Pope Gregory to Augustine, Bishop of the Angles.*

"Who may suffice to recount what gladness has arisen in the hearts of all the faithful, that the people of the Angles, by the operation of the Almighty's grace, and by thy brotherly labour, have, upon the expulsion of the darkness of error, been penetrated by the light of the holy faith; that with integrity of mind they now trample on the idols to which an insane fear had before subjected them; that they are prostrated before Almighty God in a pure heart; that from the lapses of wickedness they are tied to the restraints of holy preaching; that in soul they are brought under, and in understanding are lifted up to, the divine precepts; that they humble themselves even to the earth, in order that their mind may not rest in earth. Of whom is this work but of Him who saith 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.'"

Many rich vestments, vessels, relics, and a pall, given by St. Gregory to St. Austin, were afterwards kept in the Monastery of St. Austin, at Canterbury. Their

original inventory, drawn up by Thomas of Elmham, in the reign of Henry the Fifth, is preserved in the Harleian Library, and published by Mrs. E. Elstob, at the end of a Saxon panegyric on St. Gregory.

"The pall sent by Gregory, was for Augustine to say mass in. This *pallium*, sent by the Popes to archbishops, is an ornament worn upon their shoulders, with a label hanging down upon the breast and back. It is made of white lamb's-wool, and spotted with purple crosses."[1] The first Christian Emperors gave this imperial ornament to eminent bishops; it is recorded as one of the gifts bestowed by the British Emperor Constantine on Pope Sylvester.

The letter of Gregory to Augustine directs that the pallium shall only be worn during the solemnity of mass. It likewise directs that bishops for twelve places, subordinate to his own see, shall be appointed, amongst which was to be one for London, who was to be consecrated by his own synod, and to receive a pallium from Rome. A bishop of York is to be ordained, with power to ordain twelve subordinate bishops, and the Pope expresses his design of bestowing on him also the pall. The Bishop of London was to take precedence of his brother Bishop of York, as being first ordained, but to have no power over him.

Mellitus, the Roman Abbot, who came to England in 601, was consecrated by Augustine, Bishop of London, 604, and having succeeded Laurentius in the Archbishopric of Canterbury, died April 24, 624.

There had been a progression of events, meanwhile, in other parts of Britain. Three more kingdoms, Northumberland, East Anglia, and Essex, had become established: the last of these was founded by Uffa, the survivor of twelve Saxon princes, who had landed on

[1] Butler.

the eastern coast of Britain about five years after Bertha's marriage. Redwald, King of the East Angles, had been brought up in the pagan doctrines; but, through the incessant exertions of King Ethelbert, was led to renounce the worship of idols, and in 609 was baptized at Canterbury.[1] The dominions of Redwald comprised Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, the Isle of Ely, and part of Bedfordshire.[2] The Kings of East Anglia had several royal residences, one at Rendlesham in Suffolk, and another at Ely: at the first of these Redwald built a church, on his conversion to Christianity. The principal abode of Redwald was at Kaninghall, of which the ruins are yet to be seen, near which coins and various antiquities have from time to time been dug up; and Thetford, another royal abode of East Anglia, is even now filled with ruins of religious houses above all other towns in England.

The conversion of Redwald led to very important results. The court of this Prince had become the asylum of the fugitive Prince Edwin, who, when an infant, had been deprived of his patrimonial inheritance, the crown of Northumberland, by Ethelfrid the Wild, who had married his sister Acha, both being children of Alla, first King of Deira. Finding, after a time, that his life was no longer secure at the Northumbrian court, Edwin sought the protection first of Cadwan, King of Wales, who dwelt at Caer Segont, whose wife was a relation of Quenburga, his own consort, daughter of Ceoil, King of Mercia. The protection afforded by Cadwan, gave umbrage to Ethelfrid, who shortly after repudiated Acha.

Edwin, however, finding that Cadwan was in danger from his stay, left his retreat, and wandered from court to court, no Prince daring to protect him, through

[1] Rapin, Turner, Butler. [2] Usher, Whittaker, Butler.

dread of his formidable enemy. Such was his life during twenty-seven years, until, at the age of thirty, he obtained an asylum with the East Anglian King, and by his amiable qualities and noble demeanour, engaged the respect and esteem of Redwald and his subjects. Ethelfrid offered rich presents to the East Anglian, to induce him to deliver up his guest, or put him secretly to death; but the King, after withstanding many such offers, at last was tempted to *deliberate*, feeling his inequality in strength to Ethelfrid.[1] At this moment, which threatened such peril to Edwin, an unexpected friend arose. The unfortunate Prince was made acquainted by the Queen of Redwald of what had transpired. His confidence in her husband's honour and generosity had at first won her regard, and his many amiable qualities riveted her esteem.

Edwin would not avail himself of the opportunity thus afforded for escape, but waited calmly the result. Meanwhile, the Queen sought her husband. Availing herself of her well-known influence, this noble-spirited woman resolved, if possible, to save her husband from the dishonourable act he was about to commit. She told him: "It stood not with the high and sacred state of a King, to buy and sell the bodies of men, as it were a petty chapman; or that which is more dishonourable and slave-like, to sell away his faith,—a thing which he ought to hold more precious than all the gold and gems of the whole world, yea, than his own life."[2]

While Edwin was, therefore, yet occupied in pondering over this unexpected turn of affairs, the messenger of the Queen, whose name, which should have been written in letters of gold, as a glory to her sex, is unfortunately lost, informed him that Redwald had been inspired with better thoughts, and refused to yield up his guest.[3]

[1] Hume, Rapin. [2] Camden, from Bede. [3] Rapin.

The Queen carried her generous influence yet farther; for, at her request, Redwald levied an army, and marched against Ethelfrid. The Northumbrian King was slain in the engagement which followed, when Redwald completed his triumph, by entering Northumberland as its conqueror; and far from taking for his own any portion of that district, placed Edwin in security on the throne of his ancestors.[1] This magnanimous conduct procured for Redwald the dignity of Emperor of the Saxons in Britain, and entitled him to be called the "*British Aristides.*"

The "Villa Regia," or seat of the Northumbrian monarchs, was Osmundthorpe, in Yorkshire; at which place may still be seen a piece of stained glass, representing a King with a crown, sword, and shield, bearing the arms of the Kingdom of East Anglia, while a local tradition relates, that at that spot, Edwin, King of Northumberland, was hospitably entertained by Redwald, and reinstated in his dominions.[2]

In spite of this fine action, worthy of a Christian, after returning into East Anglia, Redwald is said to have relapsed into idolatry, the very same year,[3] though without wholly forsaking the Christian faith; for, in the temple, in which sacrifices to Odin were performed by his order, was contained two altars, *one dedicated to Christ, and another to idols.* The latter, Bede assures us, lasted to the time of Adulf, King of East Anglia, his own contemporary, who mentioned that he had seen it when a boy. So singular a combination rather promoted than retarded the progress of Christianity, by awakening the attention of the people. The return to idolatrous worship of Redwald, is ascribed to the influence of his Queen, who is described by Langhorne

[1] Allen's History of York. [2] Hutchinson, Rapin, Hume.
[3] Echard, Guthrie.

as "a woman of great mind and remarkable prudence, but too much given to idolatry." Guthrie says: "Though she possessed the virtues, she had not the graces of Christianity, being averse to its religion; yet, the generous protection she afforded to Edwin, and the noble sentiments with which she inspired her husband, together with the great veneration the nation had for her family, give us the highest idea of her spirit and good sense."[1]

At a subsequent period Ethelburga Tate, the daughter of Queen Bertha, became the wife of Edwin, with whom, perhaps, an acquaintance had commenced at the court of Redwald, during his exile.

The husband of Queen Bertha, besides assisting Sebert, his nephew (converted through his means), in the erection of the Monastery of St. Peter's, Westminster, built the Cathedral of Rochester, which he dedicated to St. Andrew. To him belonged the glory of abolishing idol-worship throughout his dominions, and of either closing the temples of paganism, or converting them to the service of Christ. In all his great undertakings Ethelbert was assisted by Queen Bertha, though her name does not prominently appear, except on the occasion of the grand religious revolution, brought about through her pious zeal, and which may be said to have occasioned an intercourse with foreign countries, which greatly tended to improve the Saxons.

The remains of Queen Bertha, whose death preceded

[1] Sigebert, her son by a former husband, being sent to France on her marriage to Redwald, the usurper of his rights, became the dependant guest and *protégé* of Clothair, the French monarch, and eventually, on the death of his half-brother, Earpwold, mounted the East Anglian throne. Edwin, restored to his inheritance of Northumberland, declined, on Redwald's death, the proffered crown of his benefactor, awarding it to his son Earpwold, whose mother had so befriended him in adversity.

that of Ethelbert, were deposited, at her death, in the porch of the Church of St. Martin, at Canterbury, where also rested those of the future saint, Augustine, who died before his regal friend and patron, and of Luidhard the French bishop,—the new cathedral at Canterbury being yet unconsecrated.[1]

After the loss of Bertha, Ethelbert, probably feeling the blank in his domestic happiness occasioned by that circumstance, married a second Queen; yet at his own death, in 616, he was buried by the French Princess's side, in St. Martin's Porch, within the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul.[2] His remains were afterwards deposited under the high altar in the same church,[3] and a light was kept constantly burning before his tomb.[4] The memory of his piety and virtues caused him to be afterwards canonized as a saint, and to be honoured, on February 24th, the day of his death, in Roman and Saxon martyrologies under the name, endeared in our own times, of *Albert.*

The epitaph on Queen Bertha, preserved by Leland, may be translated thus:—

"Adorned with virtues, here lies the blessed Queen Bertha, who was in favour with God, and greatly beloved by mankind."

About the middle of the eighth century, another Queen of Kent distinguished herself by her exertions

[1] Chron. of W. Thorn.

[2] The ridiculous Latin lines upon Ethelbert, given by Stowe and Weever, are thus rendered:—

"King Ethelbert lieth here,
Closed in his polyander:
For building churches sure he goes
To Christ without meander."

"Rex Ethelburtus hic clauditur in polyandro,
Fana pians certe Christo meat absque meandro."

[3] Bede.

[4] Polydore Vergil.

in favour of Christianity. This was Aldeburga, wife of Ethelbert, who reigned jointly with his brother, Eadbert, A.D. 725. While the King, her husband, was still a heathen,[1] Aldeburga re-established the deserted church of St. Martin, and the hymn and the prayer were again heard within its consecrated walls.[1]

In 616, Archbishop Lawrence consecrated the new edifice at Canterbury, and removing the body of St. Augustine thither, buried it in the north porch.

If Ethelbert's object in choosing a second consort had been to secure a protector for his young family, he certainly erred in judgment; for his second consort was unworthy to succeed the pious Bertha. Eadbald was his father's successor, and had no sooner mounted the throne, 616, than he married the Queen, his mother-in-law, with whom he was passionately in love, she being very young and very beautiful.

Laurentius, successor of Augustine, finding not only that Eadbald, after this marriage, had returned to idolatry, but that his example had influenced his subjects to do the same, prepared to depart into France, his preaching here producing so little fruit: Mellitus and Justus, his companions, had already quitted the country, but he resolved, before he did so, to make one more effort to reclaim the abandoned son of the great Ethelbert and pious Bertha, the protectors of the Christian faith. He was perhaps the more induced to take this step, by the fact that Eadbald, since his crime, had "been troubled with frequent fits of madness, and oppressed of an evil spirit,[2] his guilty conscience being its own accuser. Suddenly appearing before the King, the good prelate threw off his vestments, exhibiting to Eadbald a body torn with stripes and brüises. The King inquired who had dared to treat in such a

[1] Palgrave. [2] Bede.

manner one of so high a rank as the Archbishop; when he was told that St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, had appeared to him in a vision, and bestowed on him that chastisement, with a severe reprimand, for his intending to desert his charge. Eadbald was so struck by the miracle, that he returned to his former faith, and divorcing himself from his mother-in-law, received the rite of baptism from Laurentius. The people, imitating their ruler, were also restored to the faith of Christ.[1] Mellitus and Justus were recalled from France by Eadbald, the former to the see of Rochester, and the latter to that of London, but the Londoners could not be persuaded to receive him, Eadbald having less influence than his father. The King passed the rest of his life in piety and penitence; and to expiate his sins, founded a college within the walls of Dover Castle, which Wightred, one of his successors, removed into the town, and stored with twenty-two canons, dedicating it to St. Martin, A.D. 725.[2]

The converted King married Emma, daughter of Theodobert, King of Austrasia, now Lorraine. This lady became the mother of three children, Ermenred, Ercombert, and Enswitha. The eldest son died in his father's lifetime, but Ercombert was destined to revive the faded glory of his family; Enswitha, emulating the piety of her grandmother Bertha, of blessed memory, founded the Abbey of Folkestone, in Kent, and, having assumed the religious habit, presided over it as abbess till her death, when her name and virtues

[1] Rapin, Hume.

[2] This edifice was afterwards rebuilt, in Henry the First's reign, by Archbishop William Corbeil, A.D. 1132, whose successor, Frebold, placed Benedictine monks in it, and called it "The New Work at Dover." It was surrendered November 16th, 27 Henry VIII., the yearly value being 232*l.* 10*s.* 5½*d.*

were enrolled in the saintly calendar, August 31st, the day of her departure from this life.

Eadbald reigned twenty-five years, and dying, was interred, near his father, in a little chapel built by himself, in honour of the Virgin Mary. Queen Emma, whom one of our poets[1] has designated as—

"Lady Emme, of France the chosen flower,"

died the following year, and was laid by the side of her husband, both their remains being deposited at the altar of St. John.

[1] Bradshawe.

ETHELBURGA "THE SILENT," AND ENFLEDA,

QUEENS OF EDWIN "THE GREAT" AND OSWY.

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THIS lady who, unlike the generality of her sex, became renowned for taciturnity, and Enfleda, her daughter, were Queens of Northumberland. Their history being intimately connected, it has been thought better to unite the record of their lives.

Ethelburga "Tate," or "the Silent," was the daughter of Ethelbert and his pious Queen Bertha, and was educated in the Christian faith. Ethelburga's

beauty and virtues were destined to atone to Edwin the Great, King of Northumberland, for his many troubles.

Edwin was twenty-three years of age when he mounted the throne, and at the time when he married Ethelburga, was in his thirty-first year. Quenburga, whom he had espoused when very young, had not lived to behold her husband reinstated in his rights: she died while he was an exile, leaving two sons, Osfred and Edfred.

It was about the year 624 that Edwin sent ambassadors to the court of Kent, to demand the hand of the Princess Ethelburga. Her parents were dead; but their son Eadbald sat upon the throne, and Edwin was most desirous to strengthen himself by an alliance with him. Eadbald gave his consent to his sister's marriage; but not without making certain stipulations, which were rendered necessary by Edwin's being a follower of Paganism. As Ethelburga was a Christian, her brother required that she should be allowed to follow that religion without restriction, and be permitted to have her own ministers to officiate. Edwin, on receiving this answer by his ambassadors, undertook that he would not in any way whatever oppose the Princess in her religious exercises, but would, on the contrary, permit her, and all whom she might bring with her, to follow their faith according to the principles of Christianity. More than this, he declared that he would himself embrace that doctrine, if, on examination by means of wise men appointed for the purpose, it should prove more holy and worthy of God than his own. On this, Ethelburga was promised to Edwin, and Paulinus, "a man beloved of God," ordained bishop, that he might accompany the royal bride into Northumberland.[1] It

[1] The first Abbot of Bardney, named Deda, according to Bede, described Paulinus as tall of stature, a little stooping, his hair black,

was hoped that this excellent prelate, by his daily exhortations, and exercising the mysterious offices of the faith, would not only confirm the hearts of the Princess and her attendants, but prevent their becoming corrupted by the society of the Pagans.[1]

The marriage of Ethelburga, the Christian, to the Pagan King, Edwin, was solemnised at the royal city of York, A.D. 625.[2]

It was on Easter Sunday, in 626, the year following, that an attempt was made on the life of Edwin, by a person in the employ of the Kings of Wessex. Eumer—for so the man was called—under pretence of conveying a message, obtained admittance to the royal presence, when, drawing his dagger, he rushed on the King. The faithful Lilla, one of Edwin's officers, perceiving his master's danger, interposed his own body, and received the wound, which had been dealt so violently that the dagger, after piercing Lilla, even wounded Edwin; before, however, the assassin could repeat the blow, he was despatched by the royal attendants.[3]

Scarcely had the grateful King returned thanks to the Gods for his own preservation, when Paulinus appeared with the welcome tidings that his Queen Ethelburga had just been safely delivered of a daughter, its birth supposed to have been hastened by the alarm of the recent event. Paulinus immediately gave thanks to Christ for both these joyful occurrences, and upon that, strove to persuade the King that through his prayers to the Saviour, Ethelburga had been enabled to bring forth her child in safety. Edwin, delighted with the words of the priest, and the happy tidings of which he had been the bearer, promised, that in case

his visage meagre, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and majestic.

[1] Bede. [2] Hutchinson, Harding. [3] Hume.

God would grant him life and victory over the King who had armed the hand of an assassin against him, he would renounce the worship of idols. As an earnest of this promise, he delivered over his newly-born daughter to Paulinus, to be forthwith consecrated to the service of Christ. Enfleda—for that was the name bestowed on the royal infant—was the first baptised of the Northumbrian nation. The solemn rite was performed on Whitsunday, and twelve other members of the royal family were baptized with the little princess.[1]

Malton, in Yorkshire, was the birthplace of Enfleda, and the scene of Edwin's escape from the dagger of Eumer. The King had a royal villa at this place, where he was at that time residing. Brompton, a village between Malton and Scarborough, was another royal residence of the Kings of Northumberland.[2]

As soon as Edwin recovered from his wound, which was at first alarming, he marched against the West Saxons, and having defeated his enemies, put to the sword all those who had sought his life.[3]

His consort, emulating the glory of her mother Bertha, had, in the meantime, left no argument untried which could influence her husband to adopt the Christian faith, and extended the same care towards his Northumbrian subjects.[4] Pope Boniface, learning the exertions made by Ethelburga for the propagation of the doctrines of Christ, encouraged the undertaking, by himself addressing a letter to Ethelburga, exhorting her to persevere in her holy purpose; he sent, at the same time, a letter to her royal husband. Of these letters, both of which are preserved by Bede, we select that addressed to Ethelburga, who was the undoubted means of introducing the faith into Northumberland.

[1] Bede.
[2] Allen's History of York.
[3] Hutchinson and Burke.
[4] Hume.

"The copy of the letter of the most blessed and apostolic Boniface, Pope of the city of Rome, to Ethelburga, King Edwin's Queen.

"To the illustrious lady, his daughter, Queen Ethelburga, Boniface, Bishop, servant of the servants of God. The goodness of our Redeemer has, with much providence, offered the means of salvation to the human race, which he rescued by the shedding of his precious blood, from the bonds of captivity to the devil; so that making his name known in divers ways to the Gentiles, they might acknowledge their Creator by embracing the mystery of the Christian faith, which thing, the mystical regeneration of your purification, plainly shows to have been bestowed upon the mind of your highness by God's bounty. Our mind, therefore, has much rejoiced in the benefit of our Lord's goodness, for that He has vouchsafed, in your conversion, to kindle a spark of the orthodox religion, by which He might the more easily inflame in His love the understanding, not only of your glorious consort, but also of all the nation that is subject to you. For we have been informed by those who came to acquaint us with the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, that your Highness also, having received the wonderful sacrament of the Christian faith, continually excels in the performance of works pious and acceptable to God; that you likewise carefully refrain from the worship of idols, and the deceits of temples and auguries, and having changed your devotion, are so taken up with the love of your Redeemer, as never to cease lending your assistance for the propagation of the Christian faith. And our fatherly charity having earnestly inquired concerning your illustrious husband, we were given to understand, that he still served abominable idols, and would not yield obedience or give ear to the voice of the

preachers. This occasioned us no small grief, for that part of your body still remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Whereupon we, in our fatherly care, did not delay to admonish your Christian Highness, exhorting you, that with the help of the Divine inspiration, you will not defer to do that, which, both in season and out of season, is required of us; that with the co-operating power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, your husband also may be added to the number of Christians, to the end that you may thereby enjoy the rites of marriage in the bond of a holy and unblemished union. For it is written, 'they shall be in one flesh.' How can it be said, that there is unity between you, if he continues a stranger to the brightness of your faith, by the interposition of dark and detestable error? Therefore, applying yourself continually to prayer, do not cease to beg of the Divine mercy the benefit of his illumination; to the end, that those whom the union of carnal affection has made in a manner but one body, may, after death, continue in perpetual union, by the bond of faith. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and to the utmost of your power, endeavour to soften the hardness of his heart, by insinuating the Divine precepts; making him sensible how noble the mystery is which you have received by believing, and how wonderful is the reward, which, by the new birth, you have merited to obtain. Inflame the coldness of his heart by the knowledge of the Holy Ghost, that by the abolition of the cold and pernicious worship of Paganism, the heat of Divine faith may enlighten his understanding, through your frequent exhortations; that the testimony of the Holy Scripture may appear the more conspicuous, fulfilled by you, 'The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife!' For to this effect

you have obtained the mercy of our Lord's goodness, that you may return with increase the fruit of faith, and the benefit intrusted in your hands; for through the assistance of His mercy, we do not cease, with frequent prayers, to beg that you may be able to perform the same. Having premised thus much, in pursuance of the duty of our fatherly affection, we exhort you, that when the opportunity of a bearer shall offer, you will, as soon as possible, acquaint us with the success which the Divine power shall grant by your means, in the conversion of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end, that our solicitude, which earnestly expects what appertains to the salvation of you and yours, may, by hearing from you, be set at rest; and that we, discerning more fully the brightness of the Divine propitiation diffused in you, may, with a joyful confession, abundantly return due thanks to God, the giver of all good things, and to St. Peter, the prince of the apostles."

This letter finishes with a trait of friendliness somewhat singular, and no doubt agreeable to the female receiver: "We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, that is, a silver looking-glass, and a gilt ivory comb, which we entreat your glory will receive with the same kind affection as it is known to be sent by us."

The letter of Pope Boniface to Edwin was, in like manner, accompanied by presents: these were, "a shirt with one gold ornament, and one garment of Ancyra,[1] named in the epistle. Edwin had, in the first instance, hesitated to embrace the new doctrine, but the efforts of Ethelburga were destined to be crowned with success. The King had promised her that he would examine the

[1] Ancyra or Angora, a city of Galatia, spoken of by Pliny and Strabo, formerly the seat of the Gauls. It was there that the particular kind of cloth made of goats' wool was dyed, and underwent the process called *camlet*, which "gave it its water colour."

foundations on which the new faith rested, and that if he found them satisfactory he was willing to become a convert. Accordingly, he held several conferences with Paulinus, canvassed the arguments he proposed with the wisest of his counsellors, retired frequently from company, to resolve in solitude that all-important question, and at length came to the desired conclusion.

A year had passed in anxious deliberation on the truth, when, "attended by Paulinus, Edwin entered the great council, requested the advice of his faithful Witan, and exposed to them the reasons which induced him to prefer Christianity to the worship of paganism. Coiffi, the high priest of Northumbria, was the first to reply, whose faith was shaken by repeated disappointments. He attempted to prove the futility of the pagan religion by his own misfortunes, and avowed his own resolution 'to listen to the reasons, and examine the doctrine of Paulinus.' He was followed by an aged thane, whose discourse offers an interesting picture of the simplicity of the age. 'When,' said he, 'O King, you and your ministers are seated at table, in the depth of winter, and the cheerful fire blazes on the hearth in the middle of the hall, a sparrow, perhaps chased by the wind and snow, enters at one door of the apartment and escapes by the other. During the moment of its passage it enjoys the warmth; when it is once departed, it is seen no more. Such is the nature of man. During a few years his existence is visible; but what has preceded or what will follow it, is concealed from the view of mortals. If the new religion offer any information on subjects so mysterious and important, it must be worthy of our attention.' To these reasons the other members assented. Paulinus was desired to explain the principal articles of the Christian faith; and the King expressed his determination to embrace the doctrine of the mis-

sionary. When it was asked, who would dare to profane the altars of Woden, Coiffi accepted the dangerous office. Laying aside the emblems of the priestly dignity, he assumed the dress of a warrior, and, despising the prohibitions of the Saxon superstition, mounted the favourite charger of Edwin. By those who were ignorant of his motives his conduct was attributed to temporary insanity. But disregarding their clamours, he proceeded to the nearest temple, and bidding defiance to the gods of his fathers, hurled his spear into the sacred edifice. It stuck in the opposite wall; and, to the surprise of the trembling spectators, the heavens were silent, and the sacrilege was unpunished. Insensibly they recovered from their fears, and, encouraged by the exhortations of Coiffi, burnt to the ground the temple and the surrounding groves."[1]

Alcuin has celebrated the fame of Coiffi in his poem on the Church of York.

The King, now changed in heart as well as doctrine desired to receive the rite of baptism, which was performed with much solemnity during the festival of Easter, at the Church of St. Peter, in York, Paulinus himself officiating. On this great occasion, which took place A.D. 627, many Northumbrians, both of the nobility and meaner classes, received the same rite. Of the number was Hilda, a young Saxon girl of royal birth, being great-niece of Edwin: then she was fourteen years of age only, but she lived to become one of the most distinguished characters of her time.

The simple church whose interior was the scene of this imposing spectacle, so new and interesting in a nation of unbelievers, at the time was constructed of wood, but was afterwards re-edified with stone by the King, who

[1] Bede.

made it a cathedral, constituting Paulinus archbishop of the see.

Crowds now began daily to flock to Paulinus to receive the baptismal rite, and it is on record of that venerable prelate that, being at one time staying with the King and Queen at Yeverin, in Northumberland, he was employed for six-and-thirty days, from morning till night, in instructing the throng that pressed forward to receive the new doctrine, whom he baptized in the river Glen. Churches and oratories were as yet unbuilt, and thus, as among the primitive Christians, rivers were brought into use by Paulinus, especially the Swale, as at the royal mansion in the neighbourhood of that river Paulinus most commonly resided with the King.[1] Edwin is also said to have dwelt at Auldby, about six miles from the city of York. Christianity had now fairly dawned on Northumberland.

The Roman altars and temples had been laid in the dust, and a general indifference to religion prevailed at the time when Saxon mythology was introduced; and this was now supplanted by the pure doctrine of a revealed religion, which quickly spread, and with such good effect throughout the north, that it is said, a woman and her infant might have passed, without danger or damage, from sea to sea,[2] so rare had acts of injustice become.

Having procured peace with the other Kings, his contemporaries, Edwin employed himself in progresses through his own territories, for the redress of the injured—enacting just laws for the public protection. He carefully repaired the roads throughout Northumberland, making them safe and commodious; and so minutely did the King regard the comfort of his people,

[1] Lives of the Saints. [2] Howel.

that every spring by the way-side was provided with a bowl, for the refreshment of travellers.[1]

Thus, by his nobleness and intrepidity of character, Edwin became renowned as the greatest Prince of the Saxon Heptarchy. "His dignity," says Bede, "was so great throughout his dominions, that his banners were not only borne before him in battle, but even in time of peace: when he rode about his cities, towns, or provinces, with his officers, the standard-bearer was wont to go before him. Also, when he walked along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call Tufa, and the English Tûf, was, in like manner, borne before him." This was a globe, or a tuft of feathers, fixed on a spear.

It was unfortunate for Northumberland to lose so good a monarch in the zenith of greatness. After a reign of seventeen years' duration, Edwin, in the forty-eighth year of his age, perished in battle against Penda, King of Mercia, together with Osfred, his youngest son by Quenburga: Eadfrid, the eldest-born, afterwards imploring the protection of Penda, who was his relative, was murdered by him in violation of his oath.[2]

Edwin had four children by Ethelburga; two of whom only survived him, Ulkfren and Enfleda. The claims of these children of Edwin were set aside in favour of Eanfrid and Osric, of whom the former took possession of Northumberland, and the latter of Deira; while the people, strange to say, after such an example, on losing their Christian King, reverted to a state of paganism.

Ethelburga adopted the alternative which alone remained for safety to herself and family. Taking with

[1] Hutchinson.

[2] Lingard, Hume, Hutchinson. The remains of Edwin were interred at Streaneshalch, or Whitby, which became the repositary of those of the different members of the Royal Family.—Howell.

her, her children, and Uffi, the son of Osfred, who was now an orphan, she determined to seek the protection of Eadbald, King of Kent, her brother, who had married Emma, a French princess. Accordingly the Queen placed herself and family under the protection of Bassus, a faithful chieftain, and fled by sea into Kent, A.D. 627, where the royal fugitives were honourably received, first by Honorius, and afterwards by Eadbald himself; who bestowed on Paulinus, the faithful friend and adviser of his sister, who accompanied her on this occasion as in all others, the see of Rochester, in which he passed the remainder of his days; bequeathing to the church there, at his death, the pall which he had received from the Roman Pontiff.[1] A great number of precious ornaments, which had belonged to King Edwin, were conveyed by Paulinus into Kent at the same time; among them were a large golden cross and a golden chalice, consecrated for the service of the altar, which were preserved in the Church of Canterbury.[2]

Ethelburga retained her daughter with her, but fearing her sons' safety insecure in this country, sent them together to the court of her relative, King Dagobert, in France, where they afterwards died. When she first arrived from Northumberland, Eadbald had presented her with some land in Kent, where the royal widow founded a nunnery, afterwards dedicated to the honour of the Virgin Mary and St. Mildred, one of the later abbesses. This was the first founded of the three celebrated Kentish monasteries; the second, at Folkstone, being built by Enswitha, daughter of Eadbald; and the third, at Minster, in Thanet, by Queen Dompnena, in A.D. 664.[3] Ethelburga's was founded in 633,[4] when the amiable Queen exhibited to the English people the novelty of a

[1] Mac Cabe.
[2] Bede.
[3] Phillipotts.
[4] Smith's Notes on Bede.

Christian widow taking the veil,—a step which, from her high example, afterwards became customary amongst the Queens of the Anglo-Saxons.[1]

From this time till her death Ethelburga devoted herself wholly to acts of charity; and when snatched from the world, she was interred in the nunnery of which she had been the foundress. That edifice, afterwards converted to a monastery at a later period, suffered much from the rapacity of the Danes, by whom it was rifled no less than three times in the space of thirty years, during the ninth century: it came at last to the see of Canterbury.[2] The memory of St. Edwin the Great was honoured till the time of Henry VIII.; and a small church in London, near Newgate, some have conjectured was named after St. Ewen, or Andoeni.[3]

Oswy, and his brother Oswin, meantime had divided between them the Northumbrian monarchy, the former governing in Bernicia, the latter in Deira.[4] It is not certain whether Ethelburga was yet alive when an embassy arrived at the court of Eadbald from the former of these princes, demanding the hand of her daughter, the Princess Enfleda, in marriage. The account of this embassy is very interesting, and characteristic of the times. Oswy commissioned Utta, "a man of great gravity and sincerity," who was much esteemed for his good qualities and truthfulness of character, to become his ambassador into Kent. Utta was commanded to travel by land to his destination, but to return home by sea; on which account he addressed himself to Aidan, Bishop of the Church of Deira, during the reigns of Oswy and Oswin, beseeching his prayers for the prosperity of his voyage. Aidan blessed Utta

[1] Hutchinson, Leland. [2] Camden, Dugdale, Butler.
[3] It stood at the north-east corner of Warwick-lane.
[4] Holinshed.

and his companions, and commended them to the protection of Heaven, delivering to Utta, at the same time, some jars of hallowed oil, with these words: "I foresee that whilst you are at sea, a sudden tempest will come upon you; remember to cast into the troubled waters the oil that I give you, and speedily the tempest shall be assuaged, and the sea be calmed, and you shall have a prosperous voyage." All these things were fulfilled according to the prophecy. Enfleda and her train had to encounter a tempest on their way to Northumberland, the account of which is given by Bede, who had been told the story by one who had it from Utta's own mouth.[1]

Eadbald had, as we have seen, not only the honour of giving his sister Ethelburga in marriage to Edwin, but afterwards of bestowing her daughter Enfleda on Oswy. It is necessary to mention here the relationship which existed between King Oswy and the Princess of Kent. Edwin, father of Enfleda, was brother of Acha, wife of Ethelfred the Wild, and therefore uncle of her son Oswy. Thus, Enfleda and Oswy were first cousins; at the time of her marriage, which took place A.D. 642, the Princess was only in her sixteenth year, while Oswy was about thirty. She was fortunate in her match, for he was one of the most interesting princes of whom we read in the history of the Saxon Heptarchy.

Treading in the footsteps of her illustrious mother and grandmother, Enfleda distinguished herself not only by the patronage she afforded to religious men, but by the religious edifices she founded. Not long after her arrival in Northumberland, Oswin, her husband's brother and partner in the government, was slain at Gilling, near Richmond, in Yorkshire; and the Queen built a monastery on the spot, which we learn

[1] Hutchinson's Durham, Biog. Brit.

was completed before the year 659, the Abbot of which, Trumhere, was afterwards made Bishop of the Mercians. No trace of the edifice now remains, it having been entirely destroyed, A.D. 897, by the Danish chiefs, Hinguar and Hubba.[1]

Trumhere, who was the third bishop in Mercia, was an Englishman, and related to Queen Enfleda. He had been instructed and ordained in Scotland, and Oswy, at the solicitation of his Queen, had granted him the place where Oswin had been slain, on which he built the Abbey of Ingethlingum Gilling, of which he himself became Abbot; whether this was the same edifice raised under Enfleda's patronage, or one adjacent, does not appear.[2]

The Monastery at Tinemouth was likewise built by Enfleda, in commemoration of St. Oswin,[3] whose shrine was there preserved.

> "Queen Enfled, that was King Oswy's wife,
> King Edwin, his daughter, full of goodnesse,
> For Oswyn's soule a minster, in her life,
> Made at Tynemouth, and for Oswy causeles
> That hym so bee slaine and killed helpeles;
> For she was kin to Oswy and Oswyn,
> As Bede in chronicle dooeth determyn."—Harding.

Enfleda bestowed her royal patronage on one who was destined to attain the greatest celebrity; this was Wilfrid, a Northumbrian, who, when very young, came to York, where Oswy held his court. On his arrival he was introduced to Queen Enfleda, who, seeing the youth, then only fourteen, was handsome, polite, and in every respect of a promising appearance, offered him

[1] Dugdale, Tanner. [2] Holinshed.

[3] The death of Oswin, with which Oswy appears to be chargeable, from the lines cited, is said to have taken place in 651. He is described as having been "tall and handsome in person, affable in manners, and courteous to rich and poor," which caused him to be "beloved by all."—Holinshed.

a situation at court. This was worth the acceptance of Wilfrid, but he modestly declined the favour, telling the Queen that his disposition induced him to seek for retirement. On which Enfleda, pleased with that declaration, promised to use every means in her power to facilitate the execution of his design. She accordingly placed him under the care of a chief officer of the King's household, who was engaged to go to the Monastery of Lindisfarne, with the intention of entering that religious community. The isle of Lindisfarne, on the coast of Northumberland, was the episcopal seat of Aidan, an Irishman, and a Culdee of Iona, who had been sent for by Oswald, who bestowed it on him as an episcopal see, and in person attended his ministry. When Aidan preached, as he did not perfectly understand the Anglo-Saxon tongue, the King was interpreter; for during his exile in Ireland he had learnt the language of that island. Aidan's preaching was recommended by his practice. Bede says: "He was a man of the greatest modesty, piety, and moderation; having a zeal for God, but not fully according to knowledge, for he kept the Lord's Day of Easter according to the custom of his country." Under this famous prelate Wilfrid passed some years in study, and the exercise of Christian piety, at the end of which time his observation leading him to discern errors in the Church of the Scots, he resolved to visit Rome, for the purpose of learning the rites of the Church in that city. Having obtained the consent of the brethren, and taken leave of the Abbot of Lindisfarne, Wilfrid repaired to his friend and patron, Queen Enfleda, and acquainted her with his design. The resolution of the youth pleased that royal lady, who accordingly sent him into Kent, where her cousin Ercombert had succeeded to the throne of Eadbald, and requested that King to send him to Rome in an honourable manner.

The request of Enfleda was attended to, and Wilfrid was accompanied on the occasion of his journey by another youth, Benedict, or Biscop, who also desired to visit the city of the apostles; this pair afterwards make a great show in Anglo-Saxon history.[1]

Enfleda had borne her husband a daughter, called Elfleda, who, when only a twelvemonth old, was dedicated, by a vow of King Oswy, to serve God in a state of perpetual virginity. On the occasion of the sanguinary battle of Winwidfield, near Leeds, Oswy vowed, prior to the engagement, that if God would grant him the victory, he would not only so consecrate his infant child to His service, but would also build a monastery, to His honour. The day was gained by Oswy; King Penda, his enemy, with many nobles, fell on the field, and the vow was duly performed.[2] To signalize his gratitude, Oswy commenced, in the year 657, building the famous double monastery of Whitby, then called Streaneshalch from a watch-tower or light-house which stood on the cliff on the eastern side of the harbour; it was situate on a bold and precipitous shore. The monastery was designed for monks and nuns of the Benedictine order, though Malmesbury says it was for women only, and the King invited the celebrated St. Hilda to undertake the government of the double community.[3] This royal lady, the sister of Hereswide, Queen of the East Angles, who was noted for her exceeding piety and great goodness, had been invited by St. Aidan to come over from France, on the death of her sister, and had settled in a small nunnery on the river Were; she remained there one year, at the end of which she was made Abbess of the numerous society congregated in the Monastery of Hartlepool.

[1] Lives of the Saints, Bede.
[2] Holinshed, Allen's History of York. [3] Allen, Butler.

From this place, at the end of several years, she was called, by the message of King Oswy, to superintend the Monastery of Whitby. This religious foundation, which was built by Oswy, and dedicated to St. Peter, always bore the name of its first Abbess, so great was the veneration in which St. Hilda was held by the people there.

The Princess Elfleda, agreeably to her father's vow, had been professed a nun in the monastery where Hilda at that time resided; but on the holy Abbess removing to Streaneshalch, went thither also, and first becoming a novice, ruled afterwards over the establishment.[1]

Cædmon, the great poet of the Anglo-Saxons, owed his first patronage to the Abbess Hilda, and the earliest specimens of literature of that era were produced in the Abbey of Whitby. Bede says: "There was in this house a brother, who, when he heard verses out of Scripture, would, with much sweetness and humility, turn them into English poetry." The books of the convent were in the Latin tongue, used also in the greater part of the service; but Cædmon rendered the Scriptural subject into the vernacular tongue. This man was only a neat-herd, and he dreamt that a stranger came to him and bade him compose a song. He replied, "I cannot;" but the command was repeated, and a subject, "the creation of all things," given. The wondering cow-herd awoke at dawn of day, and proceeded to the steward of the household of the Abbess Hilda, to relate this wonderful dream, and the verses he had in his sleep composed. This person conducted him to the presence of the venerable Abbess, who was surrounded by scholars and learned men; he was ordered to repeat his verses. He did so, to the delight

[1] Holinshed, William of Malmesbury.

of his attentive audience. His powers of poesy were found to be no dream, but a waking reality; and Hilda earnestly encouraged him to continue to compose his poems in his native Saxon tongue, to assist him in which efforts she transferred the peasant to the school of her convent, and diligently and unremittingly superintended his education. This was no mean alteration in the fortunes of Cædmon, for the school of Hilda was the nursery of the great men of her times. Six of her scholars subsequently were elevated to the episcopal chair: Bosa, John of Beverley, and the second Wilfrid, filled successively the See of York; Hedda became Bishop of Wessex, and Tatfrith and Ostforus Bishops of Worcester.[1]

At the time that Hilda was Abbess of Whitby,[2] a famous synod was held there, to fix the time for the celebration of Easter; great differences having previously existed in the British Church on the subject of Easter, which was kept by the British after the manner of the Eastern Church, on the fourteenth day after the full moon, on whatever day of the week it happened, and not on Sunday, as we at this day observe it.[3]

The following interesting account of this memorable council is extracted from the late Dr. Lingard's invaluable work on the Anglo-Saxon Church:—

"Oswy and his people followed the Scotch missionaries, but Queen Enfleda, who had been educated in Kent, and Oswy's son Alchfred, who attended the lessons of St. Wilfrid, adhered to the practice of the Romish Church. Thus, Oswy saw his own family divided into opposite factions, and the same solemnities

[1] Bede. [2] Allen's York.

[3] The best account of the Easter controversy will be found in Dr. Smith's Appendix to Bede's Ecclesiastical History, No. 9.

celebrated at different times within his own residence. Desirous to procure uniformity, he summoned the champions of each party to meet him at Whitby, and to argue the merits of their respective customs in his presence, A.D. 664. On the one side stood Agilbercht, a Gallic prelate, at that time Bishop of Winchester, who chanced to be on a visit to the King; with Romanus, the chaplain of Queen Eanfled; Wilfrid, the chaplain of Prince Alchfred; and Jacob, a deacon, who had remained in Northumbria ever since the flight of Paulinus. On the other, were ranged Colman, the Bishop of Lindisfarne; Cedd, who had been ordained by the Scots Bishop of the East Saxons; the Abbess Hilda, and the Scottish clergy. Both Agilbercht and Colman, as foreigners, were but imperfectly acquainted with the vernacular language. Agilbercht, therefore, placed the defence of his cause in the hands of Wilfrid; but Colman would not accept the services of a substitute, and Cedd was appointed his interpreter,—an office which he discharged to the satisfaction of all parties..

"The King, after a short preface on the benefit of uniformity, called upon Colman to begin. He alleged, in defence of the Scottish custom, first, the example of St. John the Evangelist, who was said, in books, to have kept Easter on the fourteenth day of the lunar month; second, on the Paschal canons of Anatolius, which ordered it to be kept on the same day; and on the practice of Columba, and his successors in the isle of Iona, by whom he (Colman) had been educated, and appointed Bishop of Northumbria. Wilfrid, in answer, said, that Colman was in error with respect to St. John, who, at a time when condescension was requisite, kept the Pasch at the same time with the Jews, on the fourteenth day, whether it were a Sunday or not;

whereas, the Scots kept it only on that day, when it happened to fall on a Sunday; neither could he appeal to the Paschal canons of Anatolius, for Anatolius followed a cycle of nineteen years, which the Scots did not; a manner of reckoning, by which he never kept the Pasch till the fourteenth day was begun; whereas the Scots often kept it before the thirteenth day was ended. With respect to the practice of the Abbots of Iona, an obscure isle in the Scottish sea, their authority ought not to prevail against that of the universal Church, and the decree of the great Council of Nice.

"Colman rejoined that these abbots were holy men, who could not be supposed to have done wrong; to which Wilfrid replied, that, cut off as they were, by their situation, from the rest of the world, they might be excused under the plea of ignorance; but that, if Colman and his clergy, now that they knew the decrees of the Apostolic See, or rather of the universal Church, refused to conform, they would undoubtedly sin. Columba might have been a great man, but Peter was a greater, on whom our Lord had built his Church, and to whom he had given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. At these words Oswin, who had hitherto been silent, exclaimed, 'Colman, is it so?' Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he resumed with a smile, 'Who then is the greater in heaven, Columba or Peter?' All replied, 'Peter.' 'Then,' said the King, 'will I obey the decrees of Peter; for if he, who has the keys, shut me out, who is there to let me in?' The bystanders applauded the witticism; and the conference broke up. The result was, that Hilda and Cedd, and several of the Scottish clergy, passed over to the party of Wilfrid; and Colman, after a short interval, taking with him his own adherents, and about thirty

natives, returned to his parent monastery in the Isle of Iona.[1]

"The conference at Whitby established harmony in the Anglo-Saxon Church, but the Picts, Scots, and Britons, maintained their opinion for many years after. In 701, Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, who had adopted the Roman method during his visit to the court of Alfred of Northumberland, reclaimed the northern tribes. In 710, Naitan, King of the Picts, after consulting Ceolfred, Bishop of Wearmouth, ordered the Roman computation to be followed throughout his dominions; but it was not till 715 that the monks of Iona, whom Adamnan could not convert, yielded the point to the arguments of Egbert, an Anglo-Saxon missionary. Elfod, Bishop of Bangor, established the Catholic computation of Easter, in North Wales, in the middle of the eighth century, and still later, in 777, in South Wales, from which time no more controversies have arisen on that subject."[2]

This celebrated council derives no small interest rom the fact of its having united, in a view to obtain an insight into the truth, so many of the most celebrated individuals of that age.

Oswy died A.D. 670, his reign having lasted twenty-eight years, and was interred in Streaneshalch monastery, with truly regal solemnity. The widowed Queen, retiring to that place, which contained the last remains of her beloved husband, assumed the religious

[1] Colman, a monk of Iona, and successor of Finan as Bishop of Lindisfarne, finding Oswin's decision against the British mode of keeping Easter, threw up his bishopric, and returned to Ireland, where he built two monasteries. He wrote a book in defence of his own opinion relative to the keeping Easter, another on the ecclesiastical tonsure, and an exhortation to the inhabitants of the Hebrides.

[2] Lingard; Antiquity of Anglo-Saxon Church.

habit, having determined, like her mother, Queen Ethelburga, to pass the remainder of her life in the exercises of religion. The next ten years from that time, the royal mother and daughter resided together among the holy sisterhood, over which St. Hilda presided. In 680, that pious Abbess departed this life in her sixty-sixth year, after having passed through a long and trying illness, when the Princess Elfleda was elevated to the situation left vacant by her loss, the Queen continuing still to reside with her daughter.

As late as 1776, it was an opinion entertained there, that Hilda rendered herself at times visible, on particular occasions, in the Abbey of Streaneshalch, or Whitby, where she so long presided. At a particular time of the year, in the summer months, at ten or eleven in the forenoon, the sunbeams fall in the inside of the northern part of the choir; and it is then that the spectators, who stand on the west side of Whitby churchyard, so as to see the most northerly part of the abbey, past the north of Whitby Church, imagine they perceive in one of the highest windows there, the resemblance of a woman arrayed in a shroud. Though we are certain this is only a reflection, caused by the splendour of the sun's beam, yet report says, and it is constantly believed among the vulgar, to be an appearance of Lady Hilda, in her shroud, or rather in her glorified state.[1]

The Abbess Elfleda was highly esteemed by St. Theodore of Canterbury, and by St. Cuthbert, from whom she received frequent visits, and on such occasions, it was her custom to entertain her visitors at her own table: this appears from an account given by the

[1] There is a tradition concerning the snake-stones which abound at Whitby, that the place was formerly infested by snakes, which, being driven over the cliff by Lady Hilda, lost their heads in the fall, and by her prayers were afterwards transformed into stones.—Allen's York.

venerable Bede. Other authorities inform us, that the Abbess would often go abroad to make her own visits, and mingle with her own relatives. The brothers of Elfleda received her visits and sought her counsels. King Alfred, the youngest of these princes, was watched over by her on his deathbed; and afterwards we find the excellent Abbess striving to reconcile Archbishop Wilfrid and the party which was opposed to him. Elfleda was, indeed, highly esteemed by the great men of her times, and Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, in a letter addressed to her, designates her "the wisest lady." Eddius, in his Life of Wilfrid, says, "that by her wise counsels, Elfleda was ever the best adviser and comforter of the whole province; and she did much service during the minority of Osred, her nephew, by her exertions for the promotion of peace."

Under the care of Elfleda, many missionaries and scholars were sent forth from the establishment.

The 51st Letter in the Collection of St. Boniface, is addressed to an abbess abroad, named Adolana, by "Elfled, handmaiden of he ecclesiastical household," who commends to her care another abbess, her own pupil, who from infancy had desired to visit Rome, and requests her to give such information as might be useful respecting the journey thither. The letter had apparently been consigned to the care of Boniface, on one of his journeys to the imperial city.

Queen Enfleda, on her death, was interred at Streaneshalch, in the Church of St. Peter, where rested the remains of Kings Edwin and Oswy, and many other distinguished persons of those times. Elfleda died at the age of forty, and was likewise interred in that edifice. The revenues of Streaneshalch had been greatly augmented by the royal daughter of Oswy and Enfleda, and the monastery continued to flourish till the year 867,

when that part of England was laid waste by the Danes, and it was altogether annihilated, "so that the very name was lost in its ruins, and the place remained desolate till near the time of the Norman Conquest, when a few huts being erected in the place where the town had formerly stood, it took the name of Presteby,[1] because it was in the neighbourhood of the ancient residence for monks, and after that was called Whiteby or Whitby,[2] a word signifying "the white dwelling" or "town."

[1] Allen's Hist. of York.

[2] This famous monastery is familiar to the lovers of romantic lore, as the scene of part of Sir Walter Scott's beautiful poem of Marmion, the allusions in which, relating to this celebrated pile and its rulers, and the learned notes attached, may satisfy even the most severe antiquary; few could be more instructed in the mystery of the craft than the poet, who has rendered interesting and classical every spot named in his writings.

ST. EBBA, QUENBURGA, SURNAMED "BEBBA," AND SAXBURGA.

CONTENTS.

The child Ebba's adventures—She enters a convent—Marries Cwichelme—Seeks the court of her brother Oswald—Her influence—Quenburga—Birinus—Kynigils—Saxburga repudiated—Penda's vengeance—Bebba and Bebbanburgh—Bamborough Castle—Oswald and Aidan—The silver dishes—Oswald's charity—The blessing—The Hermit's adventure—Oswald slain—The limbs of Oswald—Ostrida his niece—Ebba the Saint—The double Monastery—Saxburga and her husband reconciled—Conversions—The Plague—The Queen Regnant.

THE lives of these Queens are intimately connected; their names being repeated together in the history of their times; but though the events in which they bore a share were of importance, their individual history does not occupy a very large space.

Ebba, whose piety earned for her the honours of canonization, was the only one of the children of Queen Acha who was not the companion of her flight, after the battle in which her husband Ethelfrid the Wild lost his crown and life. Ebba, then quite a child, fell into the hands of the conquerors as a prisoner, but by her quickness and intelligence contrived to elude the vigilance of her guards, and, flying from pursuit, came to the banks of the Humber, where, finding a boat, she is

said to have put to sea alone, and, unaided by any human being, safely arrived at that point of land or promontory which stretches into the sea in the mouth of the Forth, and from the circumstance bore, and still bears, her name, being called St. Ebba's Head. The bishop of the diocese received the little wanderer, who assumed the religious habit, following the profession of a nun for many years, and setting an example of superior sanctity to the whole of her sisterhood.

In process of time she quitted her convent to become the wife of Cwichelme, King of Wessex, whose power was shared by Kynigils. Cwichelme was that King of Wessex who sent an assassin to rid him of his enemy, Edwin of Northumberland, whose loyal subject, Lilla, devoted his life to save him.

Of the married life of Ebba little is known, but on becoming a widow, she sought the court of her brother Oswald, who had succeeded to the throne of Northumberland; and there she had an opportunity of exercising her pious powers, for her brother greatly venerated her character, and was much guided by her counsels. He had married Quenburga, daughter of Kynigils, a wife worthy of so excellent a monarch; and it was while he was in Wessex, soliciting her hand, that he had the glory of assisting Birinus, the missionary, in his task of converting the King, to whom he became sponsor on his baptism, and many of his subjects, to Christianity.

The two Kings, in commemoration of the occasion, afterwards erected Dorchester[1] into an episcopal see, of which Birinus was made Bishop. Oswald was united to Quenburga, and thus became both father and son to the converted monarch. Cwichelme, and his son by Ebba, were also baptized at the same time, Birinus being

[1] In Oxfordshire, formerly a city, but now a village. It first belonged to the West Saxons, and afterwards to the Mercians.

sponsor to the King, whose death occurred soon after his conversion.

Kynigils afterwards founded Winchester Cathedral, under the direction of the pious and successful missionary.

Although Kynigils and his brother Cwichelme had become Christians, Cenwalch, son of the former, yet remained an adherent of the Saxon idolatry, nor could any persuasions influence him to become a convert. This prince, during his father's life, became the husband of Saxburga, daughter of Wibba, King of Mercia, and grand-daughter of Crida, founder of that monarchy,—a princess who, by her great spirit, talents, and courage, afterwards occupied an important and distinguished position in the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy. Nor was this the first matrimonial tie which had united the thrones of Wessex and Mercia. The reigning King of Mercia, the fierce and warlike Penda, who had bestowed Saxburga on Cenwalch, was only half-brother of that lady, although a son of Wibba.[1] His mother was a Princess of Wessex, a descendant of the noble race of the Gewissaæ;[2] and had, besides, a daughter who married Cadwallo, King of the Britons.[3] On the other hand, that Saxburga, and her brothers, Kenwald, Eoppa, and Eawa, were the children of a different wife, is not generally known.

Saxburga was destined to experience the strangest vicissitudes of fortune; on the death of the Christian King, Kynigils, her father-in-law, A.D. 643, her husband being elevated to the throne, dismissed her from his court *with ignominy*, and gave her rank to a princess whom he "more favoured."[4] Historians universally admit that no just cause existed why such a step should have been taken by Cenwalch.[5] This took place in the

[1] Palgrave, Holinshed. [2] Geoffrey of Monmouth.
[3] Speed. [4] Lingard. [5] Speed.

year 642, but the perpetrator of such an act of injustice was condemned to undergo a severe punishment. It was not likely that Penda, the most warlike of the Mercian Kings, would permit so deep an insult to be offered to a member of his family without retribution. To avenge his half-sister Saxburga, he therefore made war on Cenwalch, and succeeded in expelling that king from his dominions about the third or fifth year of his reign.[1] The fugitive prince was received at the court of Anna, King of East Anglia, where, for some time, he remained in security; but what became of Saxburga at this epoch of her history we are not informed.

Quenburga, sister of Cenwalch, now Queen of Northumberland, the year following her marriage, presented her husband with a son, whom he named Ethelwold. The Queen herself had, after leaving her father's court, assumed the surname of "Bebba," which was commonly adopted by the consorts of the Northumbrian monarchs in commemoration of the wife of Ida the Firebrand, founder of that monarchy, in whose honour that prince had founded the city which, in modern times, is known as Bamborough.[2] Ida had originally sailed from the shores of the Baltic, with his consort Bebba and twelve sons, at the head of a body of Angles, in a fleet of forty vessels, and was received at Flamborough Head with joy by some of his own countrymen, with whose aid he subjugated Northumberland, Durham, and some of the south-eastern counties of Scotland, founding, in the year 559, a distinct and independent monarchy.[3]

Though some have said that the chief town of the Kingdom of Northumberland, which gave its name of Bebbanburg to a large district or track of land, extending southward, was named after Oswald's queen, there is

[1] Holinshed, Palgrave, Roger of Wendover.
[2] Bede. [3] Turner.

no doubt that it was first called "Bebban" from the queen of Ida. It is certain that Quenburga was called "Bebba" after her union with Oswald; she is thus named by the poet Harding in his Chronicle:—

"King Oswold wedded Beblam his wife to bee,
Kynge Kynygilles doughter full faire to see."

Oswald and his Queen resided at the royal city of Bebbanburgh, of which the following account has been given by the chaplain of Henry II, in 1192:—"Bebba is a very strong city, but not exceeding large; containing not more than two or three acres of ground. It has but one hollow entrance into it, which is admirably raised by steps. On the top of the hill stands a fair church, and in the western point is a well, curiously adorned, and of sweet, clean water."[1]

More modern historians thus describe this interesting spot:—

"Bamburgh Castle, in the origin, was one of the castella built by Agricola on his third campaign; the Roman wall is close to the verge of the hill on which this celebrated fortress is situated. For providing the garrison with a supply of water, which the besiegers could not cut off, there was in most castles a well, which was sometimes curiously concealed within the thickness of the walls. There are draw-wells in the Castles of Dover, Canterbury, Rochester, Colchester, Carisbrook, &c. In the old Norman town of Newcastle, the well is very curiously concealed within the wall. The great well of Bamburgh had long been forgotten, when, in December 1770, it was accidently discovered in lowering the floor."

The great draw-well of Bamburgh Castle is described as "a dark and rugged shaft excavated within the keep,

[1] Simeon of Durham.

through the rock of stone, to the amazing depth of a hundred and fifty feet," and as being "equalled only by the draw-well of Beeston Castle: this stupendous work is ascribed to the Norman Lords of Bamborough."

"The Saxon Castle of Bamburg having been destroyed, A.D. 993, it is probable that the church shared the same fate, and remained in ruin through the chief part, if not the whole, of the dark and troubled century which succeeded. Neither the church nor the castle is mentioned again till the reign of William Rufus; but before that period the castle, at all events, had been rebuilt; and under the early Anglo-Norman kings, the vill of Bamborough rose into existence. The castle was accessible only by an acclivity winding under the south-east front, through an ancient tower; and formerly it was defended also by a ditch cut through a narrow isthmus communicating with the mainland. Within the first bailey, there is another ancient gateway; and beyond, proceeding between walls, partly of artificial masonry, and partly formed by the precipitous cliff, we pass below a massive Norman round-tower which commanded the critical pass. The inner bailey, in which the keep is situated, is a level space of great area, surrounded by various buildings, now no longer devoted to military occupations, but appropriated to ministries of charity and peace. The space covered by the walls of the castle measures eight acres, and not less than fifty-six acres of rock, warren, and sand-hills are included within its domain."[1]

The youth of Oswald had been passed in exile in Ireland, and when Aidan, the Culdee, arrived to instruct his subjects in the Christian faith, the King appointed him to a see in the island of Lindisfarne, which may be seen seven miles to the north of Bamborough,

[1] Gibson.

the Fern isles being opposite the royal residence of Oswald, and the cliffs of Dunstanburg rising to the south.

The preaching of Aidan was so successful, that in seven days, no less than fifteen thousand persons received the baptismal rite.

King Oswald was the first prince of our Saxon rulers, who is recorded to have been served in silver dishes.

"When he was once sitting at dinner on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop (Aidan), and a silver dish full of dainties before him, and they were just ready to bless the bread, the servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the poor, came in on a sudden, and told the King, that a great multitude of needy persons from all parts were sitting in the streets begging some alms of the King; he immediately ordered the meat set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be cut in pieces and divided among them. At which sight the bishop, who sat by him, much taken with such an act of piety, laid hold of his right hand, and said, 'May this hand never perish!' Which fell out according to his prayer, for his arm and hand being cut off from his body, when he was slain in battle, remain entire and uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver case, as revered relics, in St. Peter's Church in the royal city."

The Northumbrians might well obey such a ruler with love. The following distich is on record of Oswald:—

"Quis fuit Alcides? Quis Cæsar Julius? Aut quis
Magnus Alexander? Alcydes se superasse
Fertur; Alexander mundum, sed Julius hostem,
Se simul Oswaldus, et mundum vicit, et hostem."[1]

Queen Bebba was herself as much celebrated by her admirable conduct, as the saintly King, her husband,

[1] Camden.

for his holiness of life. Of this, the following instance has been transmitted by one of our chroniclers :—

"A hermit, of extraordinary sanctity, desirous of ascertaining whether any other person surpassed himself in purity of life, was, in answer to his meditations, told by revelation, "that King Oswald was more holy, though he had wedded a wife." To the King accordingly the pious hermit repaired, desiring, with holy zeal, to be informed concerning his "course of life." On which Oswald, in the true spirit of that love and confidence which reposed on the purity and virtue of his beloved partner, referred the hermit to her, bidding him carry to her his ring with his commands, "that she should entertain him as though he were her own royal spouse." Queen Bebba failed not in strictly obeying her lord's mandate; but, while she shared with the holy man the regal repast, she showed him that it consisted only of bread and water, no other food being permitted to him, thus exhibiting an example of that self-denial by which purity of life is alone attainable. When night came, the hermit, expecting to pass it as Oswald himself was in the habit of doing, was more surprised than pleased when the Queen caused him to be cast into a cold water bath, according to the habit of the prince he wished to imitate!

"Gladly, and right early on the morrow, did the venerable man take leave of the Queen, and, having restored to King Oswald his ring, frankly acknowledged that his own entire life was not so holy as one of his days and nights.[1]"

No further mention of Queen Bebba is made till after Oswald's death. The title of Bretwalda,[2] or

[1] Harding's Chronicle.

[2] An imitation of the dignity of Emperors of the West.—Lappenberg.

Emperor, was accorded to this King in the year of his son, Edilwold's birth; peace and plenty were the characteristics of his reign. At last Penda, King of Mercia, envying his neighbouring potentate's prosperity, took up arms against him. The two kings fought at Maserfield, in Shropshire, August 5th, 642, and Oswald fell in the engagement. The spot where the monarch was slain was called from the circumstance, Oswald's tree, abbreviated into Oswestry.[1] The cruel victor caused the body of the prince to be cut into pieces, which, being stuck on stakes, were dispersed over the battle-field as so many victorious trophies. Some old verses say that it was the head and hands only of the unfortunate prince that were thus exposed; the translation is as follows :—

"Three crosses raised at Penda's dire commands,
Bore Oswald's royal head and mangled hands,
To stand a sad example to the rest,
And prove him wretched who is ever blest.
Vain policy! for what the victor got
Proved to the vanquish'd king the happier lot;
For now the martyr'd saint in glory views
How Oswy with success the war renews:
And Penda scarcely can support his throne,
Whilst Oswald wears a never-failing crown."[2]

The Church, to which Oswald was justly dear, rendered every posthumous honour to his memory, and not only was he raised to the dignity of a saint, but his claim to the honour was supported by various miracles.[3]

[1] Pennant's Wales. [2] Ibid.

[3] An engraving in Strutt's Regal Antiquities, represents the King setting out with his army against the Mercian monarch, and, in another plate, gives a delineation of the battle, with Oswald falling from his horse, wounded by the Mercian king. These drawings are taken from a MS. (Harleian, 1981) preserved in the Royal Library at the British Museum; which, by the writing and dress of the figures, appears to have been written and illuminated at the commencement of the fourteenth century. They are contained in a psalter at the bottom of the leaves. The MS. was pre-

The widowed Queen Bebba had used the interest of her brother-in-law Oswy, the now reigning monarch, to obtain from Cadwealla permission to bury the head and arm of Oswald.

Hardinge in his quaint Chronicle has these lines:—

"King Oswy to Cadwall did enclyne,
And Oswald his hed and arme had leue to burye,
Which he betoke to Queen Bebla in hye,
Who closed them in silver fayre and clene,
And them betooke to Saynte Aydan, I ween."

The venerable Bede records the same. "Oswald's head and arm were conveyed by King Oswy to the sorrow-stricken Queen, who religiously enshrined the precious relics in a silver case and conveyed them

sented to Queen Mary, in 1553, by Baldwin Smith, a citizen of London.

The town (which is near Severus's Wall) taking the name of Oswald's Tree, from the cross or tree the King had erected there. The MS. account of the town, written in 1635, has the following :— "There was an old oake lately standing in Mesburie, within the parish of Oswestry, whereon one of King Oswald's arms hung, say the neighbours by tradition."

Oswald's Well is situated a little to the west of the free school of Oswestry, and is supplied by a spring flowing from the elevated ground above it. The well is a small square basin, in a recess formed by a stone wall, and arched over. On the back is a rudely sculptured head of King Oswald, and the front was secured by an iron grate. A second recess of the same kind is divided from the former by a slight stone wall, and in this recess there is water also, which was perhaps granted for common uses, whilst the other may have been held sacred. There was formerly a chapel or cell near it, but no vestige of either remains ; and the well itself is in a very ruinous state, but the water is good. There is a tradition that when Oswald was slain, an eagle tore one of the arms from the body, and flying off with it, fell down and perished upon this spot, from whence the water gushed up, and has continued to flow ever since, as a memorial of the event. The title of "Baron of Oswaldistre" is now held by the Duke of Norfolk.—History of Oswestry.

A monastery was founded on the place of Oswald's martyrdom, dedicated to the memory of that sainted king, but no evidences either of its foundation or dissolution exist. Leland, in his time, names the cloister as having been standing within the recollection of persons then alive.

to St. Aidan, by whom they were carefully deposited in St. Peter's Church, in the royal city of Bebbanburgh."

Of Bebba we learn no more. Her infant son was deprived of his inheritance for a time by the usurpation of Oswy: at the death of that king he mounted the throne, being but sixteen years of age at the time, and preserved his power during the remainder of his life, transmitting it, when he died, to Alfred, the natural son of Oswy.

The remains of St. Oswald being afterwards found by his niece Ostrida, Queen of the Mercians, were solemnly enshrined in the Abbey of Bardney, in Lincolnshire, and the King's banner hung over his tomb at her cost, and worked by herself.[1] At a subsequent period, the relics of departed royalty were removed by Ethelfleda, Queen of the Mercians, to the Abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester, where they were deposited on the north side of the upper end of the choir. In that cathedral a fair monument of the murdered prince is still remaining, with a chapel set between two pillars of that church.[2]

Bishop Aidan,[3] the friend and counsellor of the ill-fated Oswald, survived his royal master nine years. In 651, when Penda, at the head of the Mercian army, ravaged Northumberland, he came to Bamborough, and sought, but in vain, to take that royal city by force. He afterwards encompassed it on the land side with wood and thatch, which he caused to be set on fire, and the flames

[1] Willis's Abbeys.

[2] "Oswy afterwards took the head of Oswald from Bardney, and interred it in the church of Lindisfarne: it attended the faithful monks of that place in prosperity and adversity, till at length it found 'a safe resting-place in the bosom of St. Cuthbert, where it remained until the outrages of Lee, and other malefactors of evil memory."—Gibbon, Harding, Speed.

[3] Brit. Sancta.

soon rose above the walls of the citadel. Aidan was at this time on the Farn Island, two miles from the mainland; and seeing the danger of the garrison, invoked the Divine aid against the machinations of the enemy; on which, according to Bede, "the wind suddenly changed and bore the flames upon the camp of the besiegers," who were thus compelled to desist from further assault. Aidan was in the King's Vill, not far from Bamborough, when he was visited with his last illness: for he was in the habit of resorting to a church in the village of Bamborough, where a little chamber had been erected for him on the western wall of the edifice, that he might conveniently reside there when he made excursions into the adjacent country. The Bishop had other similar accommodations provided for him in several of the King's country-seats, having no place of his own but his church, and a few fields about it. In his sickness they set up a tent for him, adjoining the west side of the church of Bamborough, and there he died.

Ebba, sister of Oswald, who was aunt as well as sister-in-law of Quenburga "Bebba," after she had returned into Northumberland, founded successively several nunneries, and became noted for her sanctity.

The nunnery upon the Derwent, in Durham, was founded by this widowed Queen of Wessex, and, from her name, called Ebchester. It was built, A.D. 660, and Oswy, brother of Oswald, assisted in this pious work, perhaps as some atonement for usurping his nephew's place. The small, irregular village of Ebchester is described by Camden as "occupying the brow of a steep declivity overhanging the Tyne."

St. Ebba, in her widowhood, resumed the religious habit which she had worn when a child, and retired to the same establishment in which she passed her early

years. She was foundress of the celebrated monastery of Coldingham in the Marshes, below Berwick, in Scotland, which establishment she governed herself as Abbess until her death, which did not take place till she had arrived at a very advanced age. This celebrated double separate monastery was visited by the famed St. Cuthbert, by invitation of the Abbess Queen, who was desirous that her people there should be edified by the instructions of that holy man,—a request most readily complied with.

The history of St. Ebba is much connected with the public events in her time, proving the influence she maintained by her own excellent conduct.

At one period this Queen presided over Camwode Abbey, during the reign of her nephew Egfrid. St. Etheldreda, then Queen, having obtained her husband's permission to take the religious vows, professed herself a nun in Camwode Abbey, "the convent of Ebba, the King's aunt," receiving the veil from the hands of Bishop Wilfrid.[1] Etheldreda remained in the establishment, under the protection of St. Ebba, till her flight to Ely.

Again St. Ebba's name comes prominently forward; for Egfrid had imprisoned Wilfrid on his return from Rome; and during the space of nine months every art had been practised to induce the bishop to confess that the Pontiff's decision had either been a fabrication, or purchased by presents. Threats and promises, however, failed in moving Wilfrid, who was at length happily liberated, at the earnest prayers of the Abbess Ebba, on his subscribing to a condition that he would never more set foot within the territories of Egfrid.[2]

[1] Bradshawe's Life of St. Werburga; Richard, Prior of Hexham.
[2] Lingard's Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

After the completion of Coldingham, St. Ebba assumed the government of the establishment, and presided over it till her death, which took place A.D. 683, having survived her husband as many as forty-five years. At some period, it is said that "St. Cuthbert informed Elfrid, a priest, by revelation, where the bones of St. Ebba and St. Ethelgifa, and many other saints, might be found, which, on his discovering the place, were first exposed by him as holy relics, to be worshipped by the people, and afterwards placed with the body of St. Cuthbert."

Cenwalch, after the just vengeance of Penda had caused his abdication, retired to the protection of Anna, King of East Anglia, a pious and excellent monarch, who took upon himself to reprove his guest freely for his ill-treatment of Queen Saxburga. Sigebert, King of Essex, also remonstrated so strongly in favour of the Queen, and so powerfully urged the principles of the Christian faith, that at last Cenwalch became a convert, and in 648 received the baptismal rite[1] from Felix, a Burgundian priest, who, after being seventeen years Bishop of East Anglia, was elevated to the Archbishopric of Canterbury.[2] An entire change seemed to have taken place in the heart of Cenwalch, who now received his Queen Saxburga back. Some, indeed, say that she had been reconciled to him prior to his conversion. The question naturally suggests itself, was this Queen herself of the Christian persuasion? Her brother Penda was certainly one of the bitterest persecutors of the Church throughout the whole period of the Saxon Heptarchy. Still Saxburga might have embraced the doctrine at the time of the conversion of Kynigils, and perhaps this was the cause of her repudiation, more especially if they became reconciled to each other either

[1] Bede. [2] Rapin.

on the eve of the conversion of Cenwalch or immediately after that event.

These two important events to Saxburga, her husband's conversion and her own reconciliation to him, were succeeded by another not less gratifying. Their nephew, Cuthred, son of Cwichelme, entered into a negociation with Cenwalch relative to his restoration to his dominions. The conversion of Cenwalch first induced him to assist him in his difficulties, and to receive him at Ashendon,[1] in Bucks, where the preliminary arrangements were made between the two Kings, and the remuneration settled upon for the services rendered by Cuthred on the occasion. It was there stipulated that all that part of the kingdom which lay northward from the river Thames, and the extent of which was computed at 3000 hides,[2] containing within its limits as many villages, should be held hereafter by Cuthred for his principality:[3] these lands granted to Cuthred, lay near Ashendon, where the agreement was made, and amounted to about a third part of the Kingdom of Cenwalch.[4] After this arrangement, Cuthred successfully aided Cenwalch in the enterprise of recovering the crown, which he had forfeited through his own errors. Cenwalch and Saxburga from that time forward seem to have lived in the most entire harmony: this lasting for a long succession of years, must have repaid Saxburga for all her past affliction. The husband, no longer a Pagan in heart, showed in every action that he was worthy to profess the mild doctrines of Christianity, and became a blessing to himself and others.

The first employment of Cenwalch on his recovery of the throne, after fulfilling his contract with Cuthred,

[1] Or Æscendune, in the forest of Brentwode, included in the territory of Wessex.—Kennet, Lipscombe.

[2] Lipscombe's History of Bucks.

[3] Palgrave.

[4] Bede.

was to complete the edifice at Winchester which had been founded by his father, and built under the directions of St. Birinus, Bishop of Dorchester. It was completed in 648, and in a style of magnificence unusual in those times. St. Birinus came to Winchester when it was completed, and solemnly dedicated the building in the name of the Holy Trinity and of Saints Peter and Paul. The same year the holy prelate died, and though in the first instance buried at Dorchester, where he usually dwelt, his remains were eventually transferred to Winchester Cathedral.[1]

It is not stated that either Cenwalch or Saxburga quitted Britain during the fatal visitation of the plague in Britain. The following is, however, a Welsh record concerning a princess called Saxburga, and who probably was the same:—"When the plague and famine had ceased its long ravages, those Saxons who had had the good fortune to escape, sent intelligence to Germany of the thinness of the population in Britain, representing how easily a new settlement might be made. Accordingly a vast number of men and women landed in the north, under Queen Sexburgis, and settled in Britain, from Norway to Cornwall, without opposition from the Britons. By 'Norway' the Welsh Chronicle here means Northumberland, sometimes called Albany. In the Highlands of Scotland two districts were formerly entitled Norway and Denmark, because colonized from those countries, which frequently occasions a confusion in the mind of readers unacquainted with the fact, when referred to in our histories under those names."[2] The date of that event, 664, makes it possible that this

[1] Holinshed, Milner, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.
[2] Roberts' British History.

was no other than Saxburga, the Abbess-Queen of Kent.

Cenwalch survived the desolating scourge of the yellow plague about eight years, having reigned altogether thirty-one years, three of which he had passed in exile. He died in 672, giving, at the last, a most convincing proof of his respect for Saxburga, by bequeathing to her the administration of the affairs of the state, a step the more remarkable, as it was quite unprecedented. Saxburga is, in fact, the solitary instance of a Queen-Regnant during the entire dominion of the Anglo-Saxons.[1] The measure was imprudent; and the people, disdaining to fight under a woman, not long after the death of Cenwalch, rebelled against the widowed Queen, and displaced her from the high office which had been confided to her by her husband's will. Some, indeed, say that the Queen continued in power during the space of two years;[2] and others, that for half that period, her power was shared by Egwin, and that he, after her death, reigned one year by himself,[3] and was then succeeded by Kentwin.[4] However this might be, the kingdom seems to have been divided for ten years among the Ealdormen, after the decease of Cenwalch, and the short period during which Saxburga held her authority over the people. During that space of time, however brief, Saxburga proved herself in every respect worthy to discharge the duties of her office. One of our old chroniclers describes this Saxon Queen-Regnant as having "levied new forces, and preserved the old in their duty," ruling her subjects with moderation, and overawing her enemies; in short, that

[1] William of Malmesbury. [2] Matthew of Westminster.
[3] Bromton, William of Malmesbury. [4] Bromton.

she conducted all things in such a manner, that no difference was discoverable, except that of sex." It was a misfortune to her people to lose such a ruler, whose character seems to have combined some of the characteristics of her dauntless brother Penda, possessing his splendid talents without his defects.

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